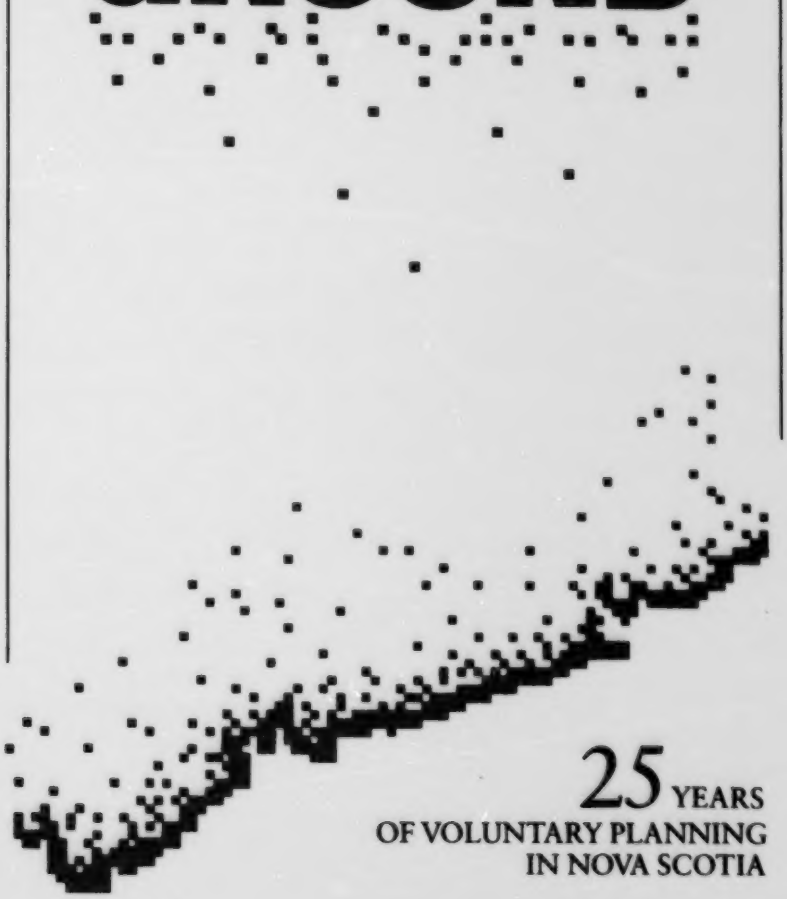
Anthony Lamport

COMMON GROUND



25 YEARS
OF VOLUNTARY PLANNING
IN NOVA SCOTIA

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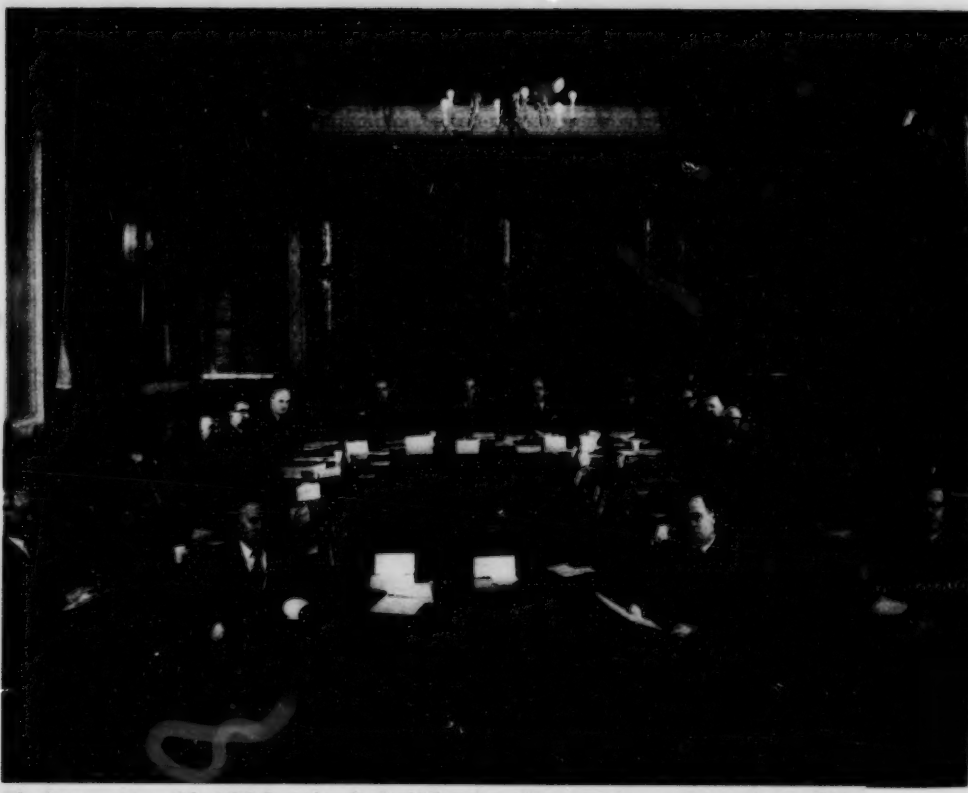
Common Ground



The first meeting of the VEP Board *in the Red Chamber of Province House, December 6, 1963.*

Common Ground

25 Years of Voluntary Planning in Nova Scotia

Anthony Lamport

COMMON GROUND
25 Years of Voluntary Planning in Nova Scotia

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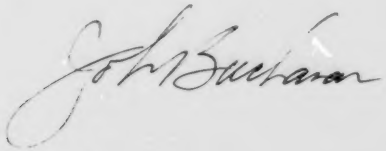
A Message from the Premier

I am happy to extend best wishes and the gratitude of the people of Nova Scotia to all the volunteers who have been a part of Voluntary Planning's activities over its 25-year history.

It is timely that we should have a history of their contribution.



John Buchanan
Premier

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PREFACE

Becoming acquainted with the first quarter century of the work of Voluntary Planning has reinforced my respect for the inherent strengths, wisdom, and solid instincts that people draw upon as they face the challenges of planning for the future of their community.

Twenty-five years ago Nova Scotia followed its instincts and created a province-wide consultative group with a mandate to plan ahead. This forum not only informed the political judgement but also challenged proposals made in the public interest to ensure they took into account the practical day-to-day realities. This was an unprecedented bold step for the first organizers.

It required courage not only on the part of the government of the day, but by the new leaders of this Voluntary Planning effort. There were no guarantees and few guidelines; they had to make up the rules as they went along. Understandably, the early years were a time of sorting out the mandate and trying to develop a process that would genuinely reflect the concerns and recommendations of the community.

It wasn't easy and it was very time consuming. Everyone who participated was engaged in a deep learning and listening process while they were simultaneously trying to set new goals. But the results were worth it, and now voluntary planning is a process that will help articulate some of the key questions for the next quarter century.

One of the major strengths is that Voluntary Planning places the primary emphasis on the people who are closest to the action, most directly involved in the issues. This creates a solid and honest starting point. Only then are the deliberations widened to integrate increasingly diverse views and perspectives.

Voluntary Planning has been way ahead of its time in the recognition of working an issue through to a consensus whenever possible, rather than just voting and moving on, perhaps leaving behind a disgruntled minority. In an era of increasingly complex problems and diversifying constituencies, trying to reduce all issues to a simple "yes or no" with a "winner take all" attitude, is not likely to produce a very useful result. Instead, all around the world people are trying to invent decision-making systems that are better suited to today's complex trade-offs.

Nova Scotia is indeed fortunate to have an organization already in place with the capacity to respond to tomorrow's issues. The challenge will be to find a way to broaden the participation, incorporate additional community members on an *ad hoc* basis, while still retaining the trust and continuity that provide a ground for continuous learning. In addition to exploring more cross-sectoral concerns, it will be very important to keep asking the most vital questions about our future.

Over the last 25 years, Voluntary Planning has moved from a local experiment to a model worth applying elsewhere. No doubt the next quarter century will be even more lively.

KRISTIN SHANNON
Chairman
Canadian Trend Report

FOREWORD

The 25-Year Committee was struck by the Voluntary Planning Board, in April 1987, to organize a celebration of Voluntary Planning's 25 years of contribution to the Province of Nova Scotia. The committee proposed an anniversary event and a commemorative publication under the chairmanship of Pat Ellis who was succeeded by George Holbrook in September 1987.

It was decided that the annual meeting would be scheduled to coincide with the 25-year event. Distinguished speakers were identified and recruited. What was to be a commemorative publication became an historical contribution to Voluntary Planning's self-examination and 25-year renewal.

On behalf of the Voluntary Planning Board, I congratulate the 25-Year Committee and George Holbrook for the success of their efforts. Theirs was not a simple task.

Authorship of the publication was secured by the secondment of Anthony Lamport from the Department of Development. Without this generosity, made possible by Dr. James McNiven, then Deputy Minister of the Department of Development, the book would not have been possible. Tony was confronted with the unenviable task of choosing the material and devising a concept for the book that would do justice to the body of work spanning 25 years.

Under the able guidance of the 25-Year Committee members, who often had to dig deep into their memories for inspiration, the concept took substance. In fact, Dr. Holbrook, the Committee's Chairman, made significant contributions to the book himself. George's diligence in making this project a success is representative of the high standards of his many contributions to Voluntary Planning. He receives our sincere thanks.

The first part of the book, *Through the Years*, traces the evolution of the Voluntary Planning Board and its search for a proper role in planning for the future of the province. It is, in this sense, more a history of ideas than events. If the story were to end in 1988, I think it would have been a story with a happy ending but this is not the case. Voluntary Planning continues to pursue its evolution and its proper mission.

The second part of the book, *A Matter of Dialogue,* illustrates the way in which Voluntary Planning is a forum for building consensus—and occasionally an unsuccessful one. Although Voluntary Planning attempts to make one point of view out of many, it values the breadth of differing opinion. I extend our appreciation to those who contributed their reminiscences.

Chronology: Highlights 1963–1988 represents only the more significant events of Voluntary Planning's contribution. It will still, I think, impress the reader as a formidable body of work.

The research for this publication has stimulated evaluation and preparation for the future. *What of the Future,* attempts to bring into focus the key issues facing Voluntary Planning in the future.

Naomi Blanchard must be credited with putting the project's wheels in motion. The Executive Committee, on behalf of the board, have given it their final approval.

Congratulations to the author for a job well done and to Elizabeth Mills, Executive Director of Voluntary Planning, for her account of the *On-Site* in the first part of the book, and for maintaining the direction and impetus of the project through some challenging moments.

I thank the Honourable David Nantes, Minister of the Department of Small Business Development, for supporting this book and ensuring its publication. Thanks as well to Ann Janega, Deputy Minister of the Department of Small Business Development, and to David McNamara.

Thanks to the volunteers of Voluntary Planning who, after all, made the history about which this book is written.

Special thanks to members of the 25-Year Committee:

Dr. George Holbrook (Chairman)
Gordon Banks
Dr. J. Ewart Blanchard
Robert Cameron
Ray Carman
John Dechman
John Dickey, Q.C.
J.R. (Pat) Ellis
Donald Fillmore
Dr. Ruth Goldbloom
Thomas Guildford
Dean Hennigar
Robert Killam
Professor Walter J. Kontak
Mrs. Isobel MacAulay-Jones
Clary Webber
Sherman Zwicker
Anthony Lamport (staff)

ALLAN C. SHAW
Chairman
Voluntary Planning

Acknowledgements

Time dissipates to shining ether the solid angularity of facts.

Essays: First Series
R.W. Emerson 1841

In attempting to piece together a reasonable history of Voluntary Planning, the most difficult obstacle has been the incredible diversity of issues with which Voluntary Planning has been involved, as well as their sheer number. Many thousands of pages of minutes, notes and reports were available—their substance and number can only be alluded to in this history.

Compounded by the obvious difficulties in writing an official history, producing a brief as well as coherent account of such an abundant undertaking has, at several points, seemed impossible.

If any degree of success in doing so has been achieved it is due to the considerable efforts of the following who are mentioned here with gratitude: Voluntary Planning staff for their unqualified generosity and enthusiasm particularly Sergio Greguoldo, Peggy Tibbo-Cameron, Carol MacCulloch, John MacGregor—who gives expression to Ralph Waldo Emerson's exclamation that "wherever MacGregor sits is the head of the table," Janet MacLennan and Ruby Watson for their patience and optimism, Elizabeth Mills for unwaivering support, and Joe Cogan, Bob Greene, Doug Hayden-Luck as well as Elizabeth Chisholm, Kelly Melanson and Rhonda Ladder, staff of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Naomi Blanchard, Maureen Gale, and Tony Crouch, Director of Publishing, Department of Government Services and his staff, particularly Bonnie Baird who performed the editorially impossible task of making order out of chaos and maintaining that less is more, Pat Johnson who suffered through the project's supervision, Colleen Abdullah for giving the book some elegance, and Barbara Colwell who made sure the input was put in. Thanks to the staff of the Community Economic Development Branch of the Department of Small Business for their forebearance.

Personal thanks to Dr. Jim McNiven for the opportunity to work on this project. Special thanks also to Barbara, Maureen, Colin, Jack, Eve and Dorothy.

Anthony Lamport

I

THROUGH THE YEARS

There is properly no history; only biography.

—R.W. EMERSON

1

The Only Organization of Its Kind

Voluntary Planning (VP) is the only organization of its kind in the world. For 25 years it has been a vehicle through which Nova Scotia's private sector has been involved with economic and development planning. Loosely based on European models of public participation, but consistent with Canadian legislative principles, it is unique.

While many governments enlist the advice of the private sector through committee structures, VP is an enduring institution comprised of standing committees that provide continuity of perspective and procedure.

The organization is a singular partnership of business, labour and government forged through trust and reciprocity. Committee members are chosen for their representativeness, and their ability to provide a well-informed, balanced opinion on issues. They are usually individuals who figure prominently in their fields of endeavour and who are prepared to give freely of their time.

Volunteer membership fluctuates from year to year. This year it stands at about 650. VP's deliberations are confidential. Those who participate set aside their personal interests.

VP functions in two ways. Proactively, it implements measures within the private sector and raises issues for the government to consider to promote economic development and contribute to raising the standards of living of all Nova Scotians. Reactively, VP responds to requests from the government for advice on matters of policy and provides discrete and confidential response to new legislation before it is introduced.

Although there is considerable contact between sectors and government line departments, the Voluntary Planning Board (VP Board) is the primary point of contact for govern-

ment, and has traditionally been able to communicate directly with the Premier and Cabinet.

VP is divided into sector committees, each of which represents a corresponding sector of the Nova Scotia economy such as agriculture, manufacturing, fisheries, energy, forestry.

Proposals flow upward to the VP Board from sector committee deliberations, or in some cases from subcommittees of sector committees known as segments. Segments provide representation from categories of activities within sectors and tend to even out geographical disparities. Within manufacturing, for instance, segment committees represent all geographical regions of the province.

Ideas or issues may come from within the private sector or from government, depending on circumstance.

Once an issue is decided upon, a sector or segment of a sector will discuss and research the question and prepare a paper with comments and recommendations. This paper is submitted for board approval and after careful consideration is forwarded to the appropriate agency. VP has produced several hundred research and position papers in its 25-year history.

A VP sector may also implement measures without consulting government. For instance, a number of non-profit organizations, councils and boards have been created to meet particular needs and perform particular functions. The Clean Nova Scotia Foundation, the Arson Prevention and Christmas Tree councils of Nova Scotia, and the Economic Developers Association of Nova Scotia are but a few examples.

Responsibility for funding the activities of VP lies with the Department of Small Business Development. VP staff provide research and secretarial services to committees, receiving salary and benefits as civil servants. While all private sector contributions are volunteered, reimbursement for travelling expenses is available.

VP has a history of attempting to deal with difficult and controversial issues. It has done so while maintaining its arm's-length, non-partisan relationship to government.

Conceived as a strictly economic planning agency in 1963, it was the only economic planning body in the province until 1969. Since then, with a mandate expanded to include a broader scope of social and environmental issues, it has served

the people of Nova Scotia in a quiet, unpublished way, offering the experience and imagination of the private sector to government to better the quality of life in Nova Scotia.

2

Voluntary Planning Today

These are important times for VP. While the twenty-fifth anniversary is a time for organizational introspection and for undertaking a new, measured initiative to modernize VP's relationship with government, the busy day-to-day work of the sectors and subcommittees continues. Even in the face of sweeping change it has always taken care of business.

While the ritual of meetings, minutes and recommendations has provided a certain continuity for VP over the years, the organization has changed in some significant ways.

It was first conceived by the government of Robert Stanfield as the way in which economic planning would be introduced into the province. It was also conceived as the body that would create a development plan for the province as well as the way in which complementary planning could be encouraged and facilitated in the private sector.

VP set about its mission with vigor. More than a thousand volunteers spent two years preparing an economic plan for the Province of Nova Scotia.

Today, VP is physically smaller in terms of resources than it was 25 years ago.

As the sole planning, information gathering and dispersal agency in the province when it was conceived, it has had as many as 18 economists, committee coordinators, and support personnel on staff. Today, with the role of planner for the government returned to the government, staff is less than half this number.

With the need for research by professional staff diminished and the contribution of the private sector enhanced, the number of meetings (the primary means through which the knowledge and experience of volunteers are tapped) has increased by 400 percent from the average of the early days.

Inside the rhythmic apparatus of government operations, in a small system of its own, is VP. Its sphere of activity and influence is quite different from any other department of government. Its cogs and wheels are designed to work differently.

Its offices are frequented by private sector people who are at home there rather than just visiting. Although VP is now part of the Department of Small Business Development and has been at one time part of the Departments of Development, Finance, Finance and Economics, and Trade and Industry, it has a separate atmosphere.

While the government's operational year is April 1 to March 31, VP schedules its operations to begin in September and wind down in May or June for the summer. Fishing, farming, forestry, vacations and family are some of the preoccupations of volunteers through the summer. As well, it is time for staff to recover from sometimes crushing workloads, to plan ahead and to do necessary research. (However, as a government agency it does maintain an April 1 fiscal year.)

VP staff are civil servants and move easily and comfortably through the bureaucracy. Yet their projects and undertakings are established by a private sector chairman and board.

Staff salaries and the organization's operating budget are provided by the provincial government while the performance and development of VP's resources are at the discretion of volunteers.

This complex and unusual arrangement has worked extremely well, with all parties clear on their interlocking responsibilities. Such a successful partnership in management is rare, for VP exists as an independent partner who must at times give difficult advice to its benefactor.

No breeches of trust or confusion about staff loyalty have been noted in VP's history, though at one point the board found it necessary to clearly delineate for staff their obligation to be completely candid, open and straight-forward in their communications with sector chairmen. Their loyalty is first to VP and then to the civil service.

Information is VP's commodity. Volunteers give freely of their time, their thoughts, ideas, expertise, experience. Research, debate, deliberation are the processes through which

their recommendations are forged. For this reason VP is in the business of meetings. Since its beginnings, some 5000 of them have taken place—and this is a conservative estimate.

The staff arrange meetings—not a simple task when they occur at the rate of two or three per day and involve several hundred participants a month in a variety of locations within the metro area and around the province. Meeting arrangements are a constant preoccupation of the two members of secretarial staff and the four sector coordinators who take minutes of meetings and provide research support and liaison to sectors and sector chairmen. Favourite locations, historically, have been the Agricultural College in Truro and the Hotel Nova Scotian. The first board meetings were held in the Red Room of the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly but that practice was dropped in the 1970's. Many other locations around the province have echoed to heated VP debate about issues of the day.

Within the organization there is a saying that it is "sector driven", that is, energy and ideas flow up from the sectors, the grass roots, through the VP Board to the government. This has always been the case, though it has been more pronounced at times.

The sectors—19 of them in 1988—choose a chairman to conduct meetings, to provide representation on and liaison with the board, and to manage the affairs and the budget of the sector.

The sector chairman works closely with staff sector coordinators to effectively manage the duties, obligations and resources of the sectors. This includes budgeting for meetings, enlisting new members, planning for research and report writing as well as staying on top of issues and events of relevance to the sector, and keeping the membership informed.

VP offices offer a panoramic view of the private sector in Nova Scotia. The diversity of the many groups involved is quite remarkable. Their concerns, in all their richness and diversity, cover the desks and cabinets of VP in the form of reports, periodicals, letters of information and concern. VP is also in the business of preparing reports to government on the views and recommendations of the private sector.

Sector recommendations are tabled at the board level first. The board is comprised of some 40 people—sector chair-

men as well as members at large who may or may not be members of a sector committee. Usually sector business is presented by the appropriate chairman and a request is made to the board for approval. Deliberation follows—sometimes heated deliberation.

The board aims for a reasonable point of view: one that represents the interests of all Nova Scotians and that achieves a consensus amongst differing views.

If the sector recommendations are consistent with board interests, and with good planning principles, they are ratified and passed on to the appropriate government agency—often the Premier's office.

Sometimes the board makes amendments and adjustments before approving a report or resolution. Occasionally, it sends the report back to the sector committee for reworking. Occasionally, though very rarely, it will not support the recommendations of a sector.

This has been a strength of the organization as well as an occasional source of frustration. Some sectors have on occasion spent months preparing a recommendation to government only to see their carefully worded, considered proposition altered, perhaps diluted, to render it acceptable to the board at large as a representative view of the private sector.

Consensus on proposals and reports ensures that VP maintains its broad point of view and does not reflect the narrow interests of one particular group. VP has failed to endorse the work of sectors with as little as one objection on the part of board members. Rarely are questions put to vote.

The sectors choose the size and composition of the committee and invite new members and select new chairmen as appropriate. Civil servants sit, when invited, as resource people. The sectors are the true source of the day-to-day wealth and diversity of issues that bring vigour and vitality to VP.

VP membership is an act of disinterested enthusiasm. The existence of the board as a broadening influence discourages lobby and interest groups. VP is not a pressure group.

The sector coordinator also works with subcommittee or segment chairmen, whose committees may reflect special interests or geographical components of sector concerns.

The incredible solidarity in management style is as much an expression of the character and preference of the two chairmen that VP has had in the last 25 years as it is a reflection of organizational ideology. The chairman has, as head of the board and the Executive Committee, always been an important part of the building of the culture of the organization.

Russ Harrington, the first chairman, had a tough forthright executive style as well as an instinct for diplomacy. Now retired from the presidency of the Nova Scotia Light and Power, he was at the helm of VP for 18 years. During those years, he weathered the storms of "Encounter" in the metro area, the crises of coal and steel in Cape Breton and numerous other crises that won him the respect and admiration of his peers.

VP's second chairman Allan Shaw, President of L.E. Shaw Ltd., has responded to his times in an equally forthright but different manner. He has brought modern management methods to the executive. Under his guidance, the executive has played a new and more important role and the sectors have had more autonomy.

3

The First Board Meeting

Amid an almost palpable sense of expectancy Voluntary Economic Planning (VEP), as it was first known, was born on a crisp morning in Halifax in December 1963.

A meeting much like the first meeting of the VEP Board, in the opulence of the Legislative Assembly's Red Room, has been captured by the National Film Board on 16 mm film in raw colour. The film, 'And Now', originally served as a promotional vehicle for this new and unusual organization.

It is an interesting time capsule. We are introduced to prominent Nova Scotians of the day, brought together to give life to a bold idea.

They look out from the screen with the awkward self-consciousness of portraits in old photo albums—carefully groomed in dark, formal suits. The sound track is a little scratchy over the projector speaker. The narrative is direct and sincere.

The first board meeting was addressed by G.I. Smith, then Minister of Finance in the government of Robert Stanfield, whose faith in this newly born organization had done the most to bring it to this point. After endorsing the new organization on behalf of the government, he and Mr. Couillard, a director of the newly established Economic Council of Canada, withdrew from the meeting to allow chairman Russ Harrington to begin.

The chairman introduced each member (four were absent) and using the Act as a foundation gave the board its terms of reference.

The first bit of business brought before the board demonstrated the confusion among development agencies in the province, as well as their proliferation and lack of coordina-

tion, documented in a series of articles in the *Chronicle Herald*. It was agreed that a fitting first task for VEP would be to prepare a report on these agencies, both public and private, including their terms of reference and possible overlap of activities and jurisdiction. The meeting then terminated—the first of 155 board meetings to date.

But why was VEP created at all?

4

Nova Scotia in 1963

It was 1963. Space flight had given visual and conceptual credibility to the science of ecology, a woman had ventured into space for the first time, John Kennedy had recently been assassinated in Dallas. Nova Scotia had survived the trivia of hoola hoops and seen the launching of its flagship the *Bluenose II*.

It was the year that Stora of Sweden toured Cape Breton's woodlands to create a management plan and observed the disarray into which they had fallen. Stora stayed to become a major part of the nascent pulpwood industry.

It was the year that bids were called for the construction of a plant in the Strait of Canso to produce deuterium-enriched heavy water for the Atomic Energy Commission of Canada.

It was also the year that the disparity between incomes in Nova Scotia and Central Canada reached an all-time high of 31 percent before transfer payments. Housing starts threatened to grind to a halt.

It was a time different from now, when the tenacity and solid virtues of its people were often hidden behind an inferiority complex as an explosion in communications invited unfavourable comparison with the economic success of "Upper Canada" and the United States.

The expectation behind VEP was that economic development was without question a desirable outcome and that the barriers to development could be overcome through initiative and organization. It was founded on a belief that Nova Scotia, a powerful mercantile force in the days of wooden ships and more recently during the first and second world wars, had retained an unactualized potential.

The economy of Nova Scotia was singular in Canada because of its stability, albeit at a level significantly lower than

the national average. Fluctuations up and down in the national economy widened or closed disparities and articulated this stability. While such stability sustained a solid core of employment and commerce and was welcome in hard times, it also inhibited the dynamism necessary for new development and expansion.

More than 10 percent of income and more than 25 percent of the Nova Scotia economy at large was a product of military salaries and spending. Farming, fishing, lumbering steel production and mining remained the primary industries, but they were uncompetitive and slow in reacting to the need to be more competitive. In 1963 both the coal and steel industries, mainstays of Nova Scotia economy, were encountering heavy going. The average per capita income for the province was $1252. While Nova Scotia had increased its investment levels by 132 percent in the previous 20 years, the Canadian average was almost double that—251 percent. Nova Scotia in 1963 was a patchwork of promise and prohibition.

Accordingly a group of government representatives, the Deputy and Minister of Finance and Economics and the Chairman of the Nova Scotia Research Board were dispatched to examine ways in which planning was conducted in France and England. Upon the officials' return, and after much debate, a hybrid organization was planned and conceived that could live within the constitutional limitations of a Canadian province and recognize the strengths of Maritime culture and custom.

Russ Harrington describes its beginnings in his own words.

> My first connection with the process was through the National Productivity Council. I was the Atlantic Area representative on that. One of the things they wanted was provincial productivity committees. I came back from Ottawa and said to Bob Stanfield, "We need a provincial committee." He said, "Fine, you're chairman!" The committee wasn't very big.
>
> Another organization that was involved in the founding of Voluntary Planning, at the same time, was the First National Work Study School here in Nova Scotia. This eventually came to be at the Technical University of Nova Scotia.

A little anecdotal aside on that...When we formed that, I went out to Dalhousie University to Doctor Kerr. I said I thought it would be a great idea to put this thing alongside Dalhousie. He said he didn't know about that because the only room we could use would be the chapel, and he felt that some of the language used wouldn't be appropriate.

Being a little brash, I went down to see Dr. George Holbrook at the Technical University of Nova Scotia. I suggested that we put it alongside Tech which was then developing industrial engineering. They said this would be a fit.

While this was going on, I ran the school in Nova Scotia Light and Power's training room.

The National Productivity Council, at about this time, felt fettered by its terms of reference so George Young, who was the chairman, and a group from the Council went on a tour of Europe to see what was going on in economic planning. Concurrent with this, Ike Smith [G.I.Smith] made a tour; they practically crossed each other's footsteps. I don't know whether it was Ike or Bob Stanfield's idea.

The National Productivity Council returned saying that they wanted to get into economic planning. Ike decided that the French idea of planning which involved the private sector in sectors and segments was the way to head it. So he approached me and asked if I would work with the Productivity Council and that would become the nucleus of the board that would become Voluntary Planning.

When the government changed they [the federal government] killed the Productivity Council, and it became the Economic Council of Canada.

On January 30, 1963, the Honourable G.I. Smith, then Minister of Finance and Economics, addressed the people of Nova Scotia on television, introducing them to their provincial government's program of voluntary economic planning.

The decision to embark on this program grew out of the realization that we are living in the most challenging time in the history of man. There is scarcely an area of life that is not undergoing sweeping changes in all its aspects. Turn where you will, you will find that the ideas and the methods acceptable yesterday are no longer attitudes and policies born of the needs of other times, which needs they

> served well; [they] are now in many fields not only obsolete but a heavy handicap in our efforts to maintain and improve our competitive position in the world. Revolutionary processes, systems, attitudes and concepts have made obsolete the thoughts, the knowledge, the plans and the methods of production which but a few short years ago seemed to be the very peak of aspect in our economy.

In the mind of government leaders in 1963 the prospect of planning seemed to hold several threats for Nova Scotians.

The idea of government intrusion into time-honoured ways of doing things was not popular. Planning, particularly in the area of land use, was seen as an assault on the autonomy and traditional rights and practices of those whose style of life had evolved over generations of living close to the land. It was bureaucratic, outside intervention that impinged on a basic sense of freedom with no immediate and specific benefits to offer in return.

It was important then to any government of the day that the planning process, in fact the whole notion of planning, be seen to come from the people and to be a free and voluntary expression of their will.

There is a double meaning to the name "Voluntary Planning". While it is true that those who engage in the planning process through its auspices are volunteers, there is also an implication that the outcome of their deliberations will be entered into on a voluntary basis. This was on the minds of politicians at the time of its creation.

Although Nova Scotia was stuck together by the traditional adhesives of family, religion, ethnicity, in many ways it was a collection of small communities. Even on a provincial basis, statistical information was not available. It was not possible to track statistical data on the performance of the economy in the past let alone make predictions about the future.

There was no regional, let alone global perspective.

5

Voluntary Economic Planning

This section, taken from the *First Plan for Nova Scotia of Voluntary Economic Planning*, introduces the organization in the language of its conception.

> In the early nineteen sixties, the Government of Nova Scotia decided that the problems of economic growth in the province must be approached in a more comprehensive and systematic way. It was clear that this would require a form of economic planning based on the co-operation of government, business and labour—a form of planning that was voluntary in that representatives of the private sectors of the economy would be invited to work with staff, provided by the government, to fix targets for the provincial economy, to recommend methods for attaining these targets,and to participate in the process of implementing the plan.
>
> The arguments for such a system of economic planning were compelling
> 1. it was in keeping with democratic traditions;
> 2. it would educate the people of Nova Scotia regarding their economy and its problems;
> 3. it would fix policies and priorities so that scarce resources could be best utilized to provide the maximum contribution to economic growth; and
> 4. it would promote coordinated action by key groups in the economy.
>
> The Government of Nova Scotia was well aware of the limited powers of a provincial government to influence the course of the province's economic development. It was determined, however, to use such powers as it had in the most effective way possible. Moreover, such a system of planning would provide insights and point up problems to other levels of government and would thus assist them in discharging their responsibilities relating to economic growth.

While economic powers of a provincial government are limited, they can, in the long run, have a significant effect on the rate of economic growth. Education is a provincial responsibility and it is realized that investment in people is a most important investment in the growth process. A provincial government has extensive powers to control the terms and conditions under which its natural resources are utilized. It has great powers to influence the growth of power and transportation systems within the province. By offering incentives through its development agencies, it influences the changing structure of the provincial economy.

The process of voluntary economic planning enables representatives of the private sector and government officials to engage in an exchange of ideas regarding the economic problems of Nova Scotia. By providing the government with the information regarding the most desirable course of future development, by establishing targets and by providing additional channels for co-operation, the private sector assists the Provincial Government in using its economic powers with increased precision and effectiveness.

The provincial government, in turn, has been willing to seek the advice of those representatives of the private sector before enacting policies that either directly or indirectly affect the provincial economy.

The basic principles of voluntary economic planning provide that representatives of the private sectors of the economy participate in the planning process on a purely voluntary basis and that the groups that cooperate to formulate a plan also cooperate to implement it. The segment and sector committees and the Nova Scotia Voluntary Planning Board consist mainly of representatives from the private sectors, with government representatives serving only in sufficient numbers to supply necessary information on government organization and programmes.

Most of the private members of the voluntary planning organization would be drawn from business and trade unions...

In 1963, the Legislature amended the Public Services Act. This amendment created a new department called the 'Department of Finance and Economics'. The new department was given all the jurisdiction formerly held by the Provincial Treasurer, together with the economic jurisdiction contained in the Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1963, Chap-

ter 12, the Voluntary Planning Act

1. a provincial board or council at the top to be known as the Nova Scotia Voluntary Planning Board
2. a committee concerned with each sector of the provincial economy, i.e., Agricultural Sector Committee, Forestry Sector Committee, etc. responsible to the Voluntary Planning Board; and
3. a committee, or subcommittee, for each homogeneous portion or segment of each sector, i.e., Livestock Segment Committees, etc., responsible to the appropriate Sector Committee.

A committee for each segment in each sector is selected at the sector organization meeting by those in attendance at the meeting. Members of the government service serve on segment committees for the purpose of liaison, supplying information and performing secretarial functions. They are drawn from the department of government which is most closely related to the activities of the particular sector involved.

To maintain continuous liaison from segment committee to the Voluntary Planning Board, the chairman of each segment committee is a member of his sector committee, and the chairman of each sector committee is a member of the Board.

The Voluntary Planning Act gives the Board the authority to:

1. coordinate the plans of the various sectors of the economy and, based on these plans, produce a plan for the whole economy of the province for recommendation to the Minister as one which the Government might adopt;
2. collect, collate and disseminate information relative to the economy of the province;
3. advise the Government on provincial economic matters;
4. watch the performance of the sectors in carrying out their plans, and stimulate and encourage the carrying out of such plans;
5. look ahead to envisage further plans which should be made, and provide for continuity of planning for the future, both short-range and long-range; and
6. conduct or arrange to be conducted such studies and investigations as the Governor-in-Council or the Minister requests.

The Board may:

1. accept, hold and apply grants and gifts made to it to assist it in performing its functions or duties; and
2. with the approval of the Minister, engage or retain persons to undertake studies and investigations of the economy of the province.

Secretaries for sector committees are provided from the permanent staff of Voluntary Economic Planning, a Division of the Department of Finance and Economics. The director of the permanent staff of Voluntary Economic Planning was the secretary of the Voluntary Planning Board. Most of the detailed work is done by this small permanent staff under the direction of the Voluntary Planning Board.

The members of the permanent staff have extensive responsibilities. They carry out research and provide statistical and other analytical information for the board and all its committees, they draft plans for Economic Planning organization and between the organization and other bodies concerned with economic growth.

In regard to economic planning, it has been said that "the most important alternative may be formulated as the choice between 'starting from below' and 'starting from above'. The Nova Scotia system 'starts from below'. Segment committees assess their segment and its problems and report to the relevant sector committee. Sector committees assess their sector, consider segment reports in detail and prepare a sector plan that is presented to the Voluntary Planning Board. The Board has the final responsibility for preparing an overall plan covering all sectors for presentation to the Provincial Government. The Board has also created five advisory councils to assist it on general factors affecting the whole economy.

The system of 'starting from below' is in sharp contrast to most systems of economic planning that 'start from above'. For example, the French system of economic planning that 'starts from above' in that the government decides the broad objectives to be achieved by the economy in the planning period and asks sector representatives to report upon the implications of these objectives for the industries they represent.

It has been stated that most, if not all, economic planning

schemes have developed on a trial and error basis. The planning effort in Nova Scotia is not unique in this respect. In the 'starting from below' approach used, a certain time period was required to establish the planning organization, create the procedures, undertake research and generally to inform those in the planning operation of the nature of their tasks.

6

The First Sector: Agriculture

The first sector was established close to a year before the first meeting of the Board of Voluntary Planning. In the Agricultural College in Truro on December 11, 19623, about 150 representatives from all parts of the agricultural industry, as well as those considered to be useful resource people and those likely to be involved in future meetings of other sectors, gathered for an introduction to the concept of voluntary planning and to found the first VEP sector.

There was a certain air of expectancy and bewilderment as people gathered in the large gymnasium. The Honourable E.D. Haliburton, Minister of Agriculture, made the formal welcomes and announced the speakers.

He said they would be involved with something called Voluntary Economic Planning which he defined as "the mobilization by mutual action of the knowledge, skill, energy and creativeness of all our people as a planned, voluntary and determined effort to increase our rate of economic growth by making the best of resources and opportunities we have."

Premier Robert Stanfield spoke of the economic climate into which voluntary planning would be born. His message was hopeful: economic hardship was a Nova Scotia and Maritime reality but the curve of growth was upward. Voluntary planning would be created out of expectation rather than despair. He pointed out the substantial gains made in decreasing the disparity between incomes in the east and the national average. Though the numbers showed real gains in the Nova Scotia economy his presentation was complex and hard to follow and not all of the audience was used to the nuances of statistical interpretation.

Anticipation grew as G.I. Smith began speaking about the nuts and bolts of the new organization—the operating

manual of this new vehicle his government had conceived.

> Perhaps I should begin by reminding us that economists customarily divide the total economy of a country into various parts which they call sectors. . . .
>
> The sectors of the Nova Scotia economy to which I have referred are:
>
> - Power
> - Tourism
> - Service
> - Fishing
> - Manpower
> - Forestry
> - Agriculture
> - Mining
> - Construction.
>
> Each of these sectors, in turn, can be divided into smaller portions which we shall call segments. In the agricultural sector, for instance, there are at least the following segments:
>
> 1. Livestock
> 2. Dairy
> 3. Horticulture
> 4. Poultry
> 5. Field Crops.
>
> We intend to proceed sector by sector, taking one sector at a time. We hope to have committees selected for each segment with an overall committee [as well as] a provincial committee board or council with a responsibility for the whole of the economy of the province.
>
> We hope that each segment committee will draft a plan for that segment, that each sector committee will coordinate the segment plans in order to draw up a plan for the whole sector. Then we expect that the provincial body I have mentioned will coordinate the sector plans in order to provide an overall plan for the province.
>
> The leading feature at each such plan should be an annual target for an increased rate of growth expressed in percentage.
>
> Each committee at each level will be asked to study the situation as it exists. They will be asked to review the trends of the past and the rate of growth which has been characteristic of their segment or sector. They will be asked to examine what potential there may for an increased rate of growth, both from the point of view of the opportunity for increased production and the opportunity for increased markets.

They will be asked to ascertain what obstacles have prevented us in the past, and are now preventing us, from attaining a more rapid growth. They will be asked to try to foresee what are the probable obstacles which will be met in the future. They will be asked to devise the policies to be followed in order to overcome or avoid these obstacles and to reach the target.

The plan itself after much deliberation would embody:

1. The annual target expressed in a percentage of annual growth.
2. A short-historical review of the sector or segment.
3. The recent and amount rate of growth.
4. The potential for growth both in productivity and markets.
5. Obstacles in the past.
6. Obstacles for the future.
7. Policies to be followed by government and industry to sustain growth.
8. Conclusions.

Prof. W.Y. Smith, who had been instrumental in the initial design of the process, gave a more academic address. He listed four stages of planning: sector evaluation, sector objectives, comprehensive planning, and implementation, and gave an explanation of "input-output" studies and "industrial complex analysis".

All of the presentations at this first sector meeting stressed rational use of resources, cooperation, analysis, information, and optimism. The rest of the day was taken up with presentations from agricultural experts and small discussion groups. Similar gatherings would be repeated thousands of times in VEP and VP's future. Anyone who has attended a VP meeting will recognize the rhythms and timbre of debate, of satisfaction and accomplishment that are reflected in the minutes of these first meetings.

As the volunteers' confidence, experience and interest grew, other sectors were given life and form. The efforts of the first sectors were channeled in one precise direction. As each sector became organized, oriented and defined, it plunged into the planning process.

7

Designing a Plan

The task of VEP was not only to design the shape of the government participation in the economy in the form of a plan that the government could adopt but also to establish ways in which the private sector might improve its own productivity. Goals were set—specific goals in terms of percentage of productivity and jobs. These were to be carefully measured for each sector.

The plan was initially to span a five-year period (later changed to three) and the whole process would be monitored and updated several times. At the end of the first period a second plan was to be produced. A goal was set for January 1, 1965, for a trial run of the overall plan of the economy.

The planning period as it evolved—1965 to 1968—was seen as a watershed time in which the most difficult economic problems besetting the province would be confronted. The main problem essentially was one of inertia. Once the wheels of development were turning sufficiently quickly their sheer weight would sustain and accelerate growth. VEP's first task was to identify both the challenges confronting the province and to prepare a reasonable set of economic objectives as a framework into which the plan would fit.

At this time VEP consciously resisted its involvement in social issues and began the first plan with a disclaimer to that effect. The board said it recognized that certain social values were shared by all Nova Scotians (and, in fact, by all Canadians).

The VP Board assumed that...

> The great majority of Nova Scotians would subscribe to a rising standard of living, an increasing level of economic freedom and opportunity, an adequate degree of economic security, the production of goods and services in accor-

dance with consumer needs and public demands, and an equitable distribution of income.

The economic objectives upon which the plan was based were taken from an Economic Council of Canada document which stated that as a nation "we were interested in a high levels of employment, an adequate and sustained rate of growth, reasonable price stability, a viable balance of payments position and an equitable distribution of rising income."

These statements were sufficiently broad to bridge almost any economic ideology and inclusive enough to generate an easy consensus.

These social and economic objectives became the goals of the plan:

- the highest rate of growth in per capita income in Nova Scotia
- the highest possible level of employment
- the achievement of the highest possible rate of increase in productivity and the most equitable distribution of incomes
- the development of all the resources of the province to the highest possible level of efficiency, consequently increasing the level of the Gross Provincial Product
- the achievement of a climate both economic and political, that will encourage the development of new industries and the expansion of existing industries in Nova Scotia.

These were uncompromising long-term goals and were recognized as such. If as ideals they were unreachable, drawn as they were from the rubric of hopeful economists and politicians, they did provide reference and orientation.

The principle that Nova Scotia businesses must be competitive was an important part of the plan but carried with it the corollary that planning must encourage the termination of industries that were not viable.

This was dangerous territory, for the storm over steel and coal in Cape Breton was brewing in the background. Though the plan's introduction added that individuals displaced by the closure of uncompetitive industries should receive all necessary compensation and direct assistance, it was a controversial issue.

The plan involved the efforts of over 2000 volunteers and several years of staff contributions. Its general goal was to improve the standard of living of the people of the province by increasing the rate at which jobs were created as well as the rate of growth of the provincial economy. Only two of the objectives of the plan were specific enough to be quantifiable:

- an increase of 3400 new jobs annually or a total increase of 13,600 new jobs over the four-year planning period
- an annual growth rate in new capital investment of 9.2 percent to a level of 300 million in 1968.

Two were more general:

- the establishment and expansion of efficient and self-supporting economic activities to provide new employment
- the provision of a suitable foundation for the 1965–68 period for future growth and development.

General recommendations were made to encourage an economic climate appropriate to development.

At the very core of the philosophy of the first plan—indeed of almost all of the thinking on economic development at the time—was the idea that while the resource industries might continue a moderate growth, the real opportunities for expansion were in secondary manufacturing and service.

It was considered that as part of the rationalization of industrial growth, the conscious allocation of new improvements should be based on the geographic and demographic suitability of potential sites. To this end categories of sites for growth were established. The plan set this provision out as follows: "The largest urban areas should be designated as industrial development centres to be regarded as desirable locations for secondary manufacturing industries."

There would be other locations of commercial activity in the province whose economic advantage was exclusive because of features such as mineral deposits, forests, water supply, a harbour. These would be resource centres. Other areas without an exploitable resource could become service centres where this rapidly growing segment of the economy would be nurtured and encouraged. Some centres would have both qualities.

Other recommendations made in the plan were:

> The Atlantic Development Board should be requested to establish a capital grant fund, to be used to offer equivalent financial incentives in the Halifax/Dartmouth area as now available in all other areas of Nova Scotia through the area development agency.
>
> A special economic research unit should be established as a government service having the immediate priority of determining the type of industry to be attracted to the industrial development centres, the findings of such research to be turned over to IEL [Industrial Estates Limited]; and
>
> Industrial Estates Limited should continue to play a promotional role, should sustain its endeavours to attract industry to the entire province, especially to the industrial development centres, and should substantially increase its staff so that its remarkably successful efforts to date may be maintained and reinforced.
>
> The board believes that freer trade in the whole North Atlantic area would be of very substantial benefit to the economy of Nova Scotia. Present tariff barriers are thought by the board to restrict prospects for expanding the province's secondary manufacturing base.
>
> With regard to implementation the board recommends that a committee composed of three cabinet ministers should be formed and charged with advice to the provincial government on economic development matters and implementation of the development plan.

One recommendation made was that the provincial government give consideration to the integration of staff functions concerned with the economic planning and industrial development (other than those performed by Industrial Estates Limited personnel) within one organization. This recommendation proved to be particularly fateful in VEP's future.

The first plan for economic development was a success for a number of reasons. It was the first occasion on which the province had been treated as an independent economic entity in statistical and information terms. Data had previously only been available for the Atlantic Provinces as a whole. It was the first time in which a provincial overview of the economy had been assembled. It was also the first attempt at setting com-

prehensive goals for the economic performance of the government and the private sector, and at measuring performance indicators.

Above all it legitimized the whole notion of planning as a possible, democratic and strategic way to manage the economy and the body politic.

8

Coal and Steel

Its open mandate allowed VEP to deal with all issues affecting the economic life of Nova Scotians. It often focused on subjects of particular importance through special committees, giving them an agreed-upon life expectancy. Sometimes VEP worked with representatives of other organizations with parallel or intersecting concerns.

Through late 1965 and into 1967 much of VEP's efforts and resources were directed toward questions concerning coal and steel production in Nova Scotia.

The problems of the coal and steel industry in Cape Breton were as persistent as coal dust. There were no clear solutions. The industries were visibly declining in the early sixties. They employed many thousands of Nova Scotians.

The uncertainty facing the Cape Breton coal miners and their families, and the difficulties surrounding the unprofitable efforts of the Dominion Steel and Coal Company to operate the province's largest coal mine were immediate problems and in a sense they were "no-win" ones.

Solving such problems was not the purpose for which VEP had been created, nor were its resources or its structure particularly well suited to the hurly burly of negotiation, pressure and compromise that lay ahead.

The first plan was not particularly sanguine about the future ability of coal to be self-sustaining as an industry, and expressed its somewhat pessimistic view of the future of steel to the government as well. At the same time the board took a stand against preserving individual businesses or industries that were no longer competitive; it recognized that subsidies to coal would soon outstrip the provincial government's ability to continue them. It was clear as well, however, that economic problems had a human face. Settled, well-established

communities whose social and cultural fabric and very livelihood depended to a great extent on a single industry could not be allowed to rip apart.

VEP's remedy was as follows. Coal must be gradually phased out or at least its output reduced to a level where the mines could continue independently. Simultaneously all efforts should be made to diversify the economies of regions dependent on coal and to reduce the costs of production and thus the burden of subsidies. The board recognized that the federal government was studying the matter and anticipated that such study would precipitate federal intervention. It therefore limited itself to considering short-term solutions.

The future of steel in the province was also considered to be in doubt. Targets for production of steel had in fact been treated with much debate and concern during the preparation of the first plan. Consequently, the board asked the Atlantic Development Board, the federal government's regional development agency of the time, to help form a joint committee to study the future of steel in the province.

The committee, consisting of E.R. Mills, Executive Director of VEP, Mr. E.L. Goodfellow and Rev. J.N. MacNeil, Vice President of VEP, as well as representatives from the Dominion Steel and Coal Company, was established in March 1965 with the federal Department of Industry providing technical advice and support. Of particular concern were proposals for steel manufacturing in Quebec and New Brunswick and the ways in which market diversification might circumvent damaging competition.

In October 1966 the federal government released a study conducted by J.R. Donald entitled the *Cape Breton Coal Problem*. At the request of the board the special committee met in emergency sessions to consider an appropriate response to the federal report. Accordingly it made a submission, approved by the board, to the Minister of Finance and Economics. The submission was in fact a reiteration of a position taken by the committee in December of 1965 and included in modified form in the first plan. It stated that the industry should be stabilized, that diversification of the Cape Breton economy be encouraged through grants and incentives, and that the cost to the provincial government be minimized through measures of economy.

The committee upheld many of the Donald report suggestions. A notable point of departure was that it envisioned The Cape Breton Development Corporation as one organization with two synchronized wings, while the Donald Report recommended two separate and distinct organizations.

Soon after the report of the joint committee was made, the federal government announced the creation of DEVCO, a crown corporation to take over the Dominion Steel and Coal Company's (DOSCO's) coal interests in Cape Breton and to promote new industry within the context of an overall development plan. It also announced funding of $45,000,000.

VEP was for the most part optimistic about the future of DEVCO and the way in which a crisis had apparently been diverted, and was prepared to say so publicly. It did have reservations, however, about the ability of the provincial government to assume financial responsibility for the other independent mines—a contingency of the federal DOSCO takeover.

On October 2, 1967 the Joint Committee on Steel, after intermittent meetings with union representatives and officials from DOSCO, released its findings, some two and a half years after it was established.

The report was titled *The Sydney Steel Study* and its overall conclusion was that Sydney was not a particularly good place to make steel. As a location, it had no geographical advantages with regard to proximity of markets or transportation costs.

Despite an overall sense of pessimism, the committee concluded in the report that immediate threats of closure were not serious. However no substantive analysis was possible because the committee had been forced to limit its investigations to issues of market diversity. The real issues with which it was eager to grapple, such as cost efficiency and general viability, were hidden behind the secrecy and confidentiality surrounding negotiations between the provincial government and DOSCO. VEP was not privy to these negotiations; data concerning operating costs was not available; and talks with DOSCO had not reflected a particular sense of urgency.

It is not surprising then that an announcement made by the company 11 days after the study was released took the

board by surprise. The announcement was that steps would be taken to close the Sydney mill by April 30, 1968. DOSCO held out no hope for the mill to ever be competitive, even if money were available for modernization. Emergency meetings of the Joint Committee and the VEP board produced hurried recommendations that all measures be taken to keep the plant open.

The report argued that the steel plant was viable in the short-term and that there was a feeling that poor management practices and excessive management fees extracted by the parent company had placed unworkable financial burdens on the operation.

On November 17 the board agreed that...

> A Crown Corporation be established immediately by the provincial government with financial assistance expected from the federal government to operate the Sydney takeover as a going concern. In this takeover the government should make all endeavours to find at the earliest possible time a suitable investment group to operate the steel plant.

It further encouraged a comprehensive study of the steel industry and whatever steps necessary to be taken for continuity, if viability were to be established. Soon after, a crown corporation was created to sustain the operations of the plant until April of the next year—Sysco.

On December 12, 1967 the VP Board called for a study to be conducted that would assess the possibility for Sysco's long-term operation. VEP wanted to be a genuine contributor to the study this time and made its point in no uncertain terms.

The crises in coal and steel took its toll on the organization. The government had demonstrated that its interests and agenda were different from those of VEP by its unwillingness to include the board in its deliberations with DOSCO or to keep it posted on developments. It had acted in this manner not particularly because of a lack of confidence but out of recognition that the private sector composition of VEP would on occasion exclude it from sensitive negotiations.

The trade unions felt that VEP had not been particularly candid with them and attributed this to its quasi-governmental status. The organization's position was not readily evident to outsiders, exacerbated at least in part by its policy of confidential deliberation and low-key operations.

9

The Econometric Model

The successful deployment of resources and construction of the first plan were confidence builders for VEP. A planning project of such magnitude had never before been attempted in the province and no one had truly known whether it could be done.

Now it set about the task of preparing a second plan, addressing the question of comprehensive planning on a continuing basis, primarily through staff enthusiasm. VEP engaged the services of Professor Czamanski of Chicago University and a group of graduate students.

These distinguished academics set about constructing an econometric or predictive model of the province's economy under the auspices of the Institute of Public Affairs at Dalhousie University. The model was really a large equation; the variables represented the forces acting within and on the Nova Scotia economy. Thus, an increase in wages, represented in the form of an equation, might precipitate an increase in inflation rates, similarly expressed—mitigated by lower interest rates and so on. Each variable acted upon the others.

Prof. Czamanski presented the model to the board December 1968, outlining its construction and how it would fit into the process in which VEP was engaged. In the same way that the economy was dynamic, he explained, so data would have to be updated and kept current, constantly evolving with experience and testing. Since it was an abstract and almost tensile structure, its value lay in its ability to convey the relational outcomes of different economic measures that might be taken, rather than absolute ones.

Some concern had been expressed at a previous trial run of the model. The authors had asked those in attendance to challenge the system by asking economic questions. One board member asked for a simulation of one of perhaps the

most disastrous possibilities imaginable for Nova Scotia economics—the withdrawal of the defence establishments in the area and their 30 percent contribution to total wages. The computer began its calculations. To everyone's dismay the program replied that such a withdrawal would have absolutely no effect on the commercial life of the province.

At the December meeting this dismay was expressed as concern as to the efficacy of the model and tabled in the form of a letter written to the board by R.B. Killam. The minutes of that meeting record that

> Mr. Killam's concern centered around the model's failure to show any significant reaction by its target variables to changes in the instrument variables. Professor Czamanski agreed that this was a valid observation. He pointed out that over the period tested only one instrument variable at a time had been altered in relation to the target variables. The model inferred therefore that the Nova Scotia economy required massive injections of development capital to produce desired effects.

A slightly dubious but staunchly optimistic board resolved that premature judgment should not be passed on the model at this early stage but neither should it be the only planning tool the board should use. Its cost-benefit would be monitored carefully during the production of the second plan.

As a postscript to this meeting, one board member pointed out that the office space in which VEP was located was quite unsuited to the kind of work that staff were involved in and that this must without doubt have an effect on their productivity. The complexity of VEP's relationship with government is illustrated in the board's ruling that the content of staff productivity was within its jurisdiction but the circumstances of its productivity were not.

The econometric model was perhaps ambitious for its time. Computer software was still in its infancy. It was abandoned partly because the second plan itself was abandoned as well as the whole notion of a single comprehensive plan, and because it could not be made to work. It was put to rest quietly, an idea before its time.

10

In Some Ways a Brilliant Failure

The first plan by VEP for economic development for Nova Scotia introduced the idea of planning as a worthwhile technique of managing development. It is difficult then to understand why, in some important ways, it was a failure, albeit a brilliant one.

During its preparation, comprehensive information about the interdepartmental basis of government policy and behaviour was not available, not because it was withheld but because there was little if any coordination or even communication between government departments. Financial management was carried out by a provincial accountant who recorded financial figures in a large book. Statistics Canada could provide only regional data of relevance.

After the coal and steel crises in Cape Breton and following publication of VEP's first plan, the government realized that planning and management could only be addressed from within the civil service. It had been a tall order to ask the private sector to plan the future of the Government of Nova Scotia.

Resistance to the plan within the civil service was substantial and thinly veiled. The plan was perceived as posing a threat to the autonomy of high level administrators within the government. Civil servants had no clear means through which they could respond to, evaluate and then implement, the recommendations of the plan. Without a policy framework of their own, how could they respond effectively to the plan? Their response, required by Cabinet for May and June of 1966 and again in 1967, was inconclusive.

Although major portions of the plan were incorporated into policy and practice, the government could not accept the plan as a whole.

Frustrated, the board carried out spring cleaning on outstanding recommendations, instructing the sectors to evaluate their own performance. The list of these recommendations, ranging from hog farming and truck axle weights to inflation fighting and international trade, was four inches thick and designed to improve almost every part of the Nova Scotia economy. Implementation had been successful, very successful, but patchy and inconsistent.

The board reduced the number of recommendations for the government to consider to eight, establishing their priority and, hopefully, the likelihood of their implementation.

A meeting with the Premier was neither comforting nor conclusive. VEP had been founded on comprehensive planning and its failure to apply the idea was demoralizing. The board demured, wiped the slate clean of recommendations and with its dignity and commitment intact, went about its regular business feeling its way gingerly in the future. As the 1960's crept toward an end the provincial civil service increasingly took on the role of planning for itself through Cabinet and its committees.

A Cabinet committee for programs was established which, through its staff and research resources (known as the Secretariat), planned a development strategy for the government. At the time, though Secretariat staff attended VEP sector and board meetings, their relationship with VEP was often characterized by rivalry and wariness.

Externally, VEP was bouyant and busy. Internally, there was grave concern that the organization's useful role was disappearing at the very time there was a growing need for it to continue.

The paradox was circumstantial. VEP had been painted into a corner by its own success. It had prepared a superb plan that no one could implement.

The very creation of a document that articulated goals for the province's economy was an astounding achievement. It established at once both the power of planning as a persuasive medium and its accessibility as a tool of the private sector. The problem was that the plan established goals but not specific means. It showed where to go but not how exactly to get there.

Dalhousie University's Economics Department called it a "muddled document" that did not include a plan of action, while admitting that it had not read the whole plan. However, it was a damaging indictment, nonetheless.

The targets laid down in the plan were not only reached but surpassed. This was not a superficial success—for they had been set at a level substantially beyond levels that could have been extrapolated from the previous performance of the economy.

11

Redefining The Mandate

In June of 1969 a meeting was held with the Minister of Finance and Economics to discuss planning in Nova Scotia in general and the VEP operations in particular.

Present at this more formal meeting were R. Harrington, George Holbrook, F.C. Hudson, G.C. McDade, J.R. Mills, G.H. O'Neill, and C.A. Webber.

The meeting was a success. One proposal made was that subsequent meetings occur monthly, to ensure the smooth exchange of information between VEP staff and the Cabinet Secretariat. Two other proposals were that a more active role be created for senior government officials within VEP and that a special committee be struck to redefine and renegotiate a whole new role for the organization.

Another meeting between Russ Harrington and the new Premier, Gerald Regan, on the occasion of the creation of the new Department of Development and the appointment of Doug MacDonald as Executive Director (replacing Roger Mills, VEP's first Director), had been blunt and to the point. The VEP Chairman had pointed out the reticence of the civil service to cooperate in support of board and sector activities and requested that either the needed cooperation be enforced as policy or VEP be closed down. The Premier agreed that word would go out to the civil service.

The June 1969 meeting formally served to announce the creation of a five-man Cabinet committee on planning and programs to replace the several existing Cabinet committees that were involved with various groups and organizations at the time.

An official planning working committee would report to the Cabinet committee. It would be composed of the directors of the various provincial agencies involved in economic development and planning such as VEP, the Program Development Agency (a newly formed provincial committee on stategic planning), the Department of Trade and Industry and the Community Planning Division of the Department of Municipal Affairs. It was argued that this structure would satisfy a recommendation contained in the first plan.

> The Provincial Government [should] give consideration to consolidating those professionals concerned with economic planning and industrial development, other than Industrial Estates Ltd. personnel, within the government organization.

At this same meeting, the chairman of VEP raised the issue of a second plan for the province. This was ahead of schedule but was suggested to synchronize with census periods, facilitate data collection and render that data immediately applicable.

The question of the second plan raised serious issues of redundancy. If the government was capable of producing its own plan through its own resources how could VEP continue to fulfill its original mandate? While producing the first plan, VEP members had recognized that the organization's horizons should be expanded to include social and environmental concerns. This was the key to the future.

The special committee that was to redefine VEP's mandate was brought together and began its work. There was a sense of real urgency surrounding the work of the committee. It seemed as if the government might pull the plug on its funding.

The committee tabled its findings after much deliberation. Their important report was the first item on the agenda in November 1969. It contained a number of sweeping recommendations. A paper had already been prepared by staff on voluntary planning's new role before the committee was established, and it was presented in day-long consultations.

By concentrating on what VEP actually did, and did best, the report made apparent what VEP's proper place was in the planning process. It provided voluntary planning with a

new and far reaching mission statement: "to provide for the effective involvement of the private sector in development planning."

The report suggested that VEP's continuity and private sector practical experience should be brought to bear to "facilitate the identification of problems by the private sector and to relate appropriate private and public resources in an attempt to resolve these problems" and to "involve the private sector in the analysis of government planning proposals during the process of their development, and prior to their final approval."

For this redefined role to work, certain conditions were essential: the government had to be willing to involve VEP in planning—in fact, had to take the initiative to seek its advice; VEP had to be able to initiate measures within the private sector without the direct involvement of government. VEP would have to improve the quality of its research and analysis of proposals and refocus its efforts on the concerns of the private sector.

> The report outlined positive aspects of VEP operations. Possibly the most successful aspect of VEP operations has been in providing a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas between elements of industry, business and labour, and to some extent government. The process has also given a large number of individuals in the private sector a clearer insight into the complexities involved in the implementation of recommendations by government.
>
> The operation of VEP has demonstrated the willingness of the private sector to contribute on a voluntary basis. This has been well illustrated in the time and effort devoted to the preparation of proposals, some of which were not accepted.
>
> . . .In view of the foregoing, it is clear that the original concept of VEP being a planning body to the extent outlined in the Act is no longer applicable. However, the Committee considers that the concept of involvement of the private sector has, in VEP, illustrated an excellent potential, and an active and more effective participation of the private sector in overall development planning should be the basis for a revised role for VEP.

Crucial to an understanding of the distinction between Voluntary Economic Planning and the new organization

known as Voluntary Planning were two key propositions. There would be no more planning *for* the government but *with* the government. VEP would bow out as principal and re-enter as advisor. This would leave the organization to turn to more familiar turf, its own—the private sector. The process of planning was too important not to involve the coordinated efforts of both the public and private sectors. The second proposition was a key factor in the new blueprint: the limitations of economic planning had to be discarded for the broader scope of development planning which could embrace social and environmental issues profoundly affecting the economy, its disposition and its growth.

If the report took a swipe at the government's lack of attentiveness, it was also critical of VEP's failure to be more forward looking and reluctance to deal with issues of particular importance to Nova Scotians. It urged the organization to be prepared, at all levels, to deal with controversial issues, with the expectation that competent and thorough research and analysis would minimize controversy.

To carry out its new purpose VP would have to examine its organizational structure in a critical way. The report also touched on the thorny issue of VP's quasi-governmental status. Independent status was considered and abandoned. A compromise was proposed that gave virtual autonomy to the board with regards to membership and complete autonomy to the sectors. A strengthened executive, including at least one labour representative, would take over formal responsibility for staff appointments, sector appointments and control of the budget.

The technical staff's considerable informational tasks were to be transferred to appropriate government departments—such tasks as economic analysis for the Department of Finance and Economics and for the Premier's office, analysis for the issuance of bonds, sitting on various committees, and producing the *Nova Scotia Statistical Review*, the *Nova Scotia Economic Review* and the *Economic Indicators Book*.

In general, the report recommended that internal and external communication be enhanced. Sector dissatisfaction over the remoteness of board decisions could be resolved by

assigning board members to sector meetings. Government would be better served by regular monthly meetings with board representatives and a more efficient reporting and recommendation procedure.

Response to the report, though largely favourable, was mixed.

The report's recommendations diminished the organization's role to some extent while they relieved it of the burden of producing a second plan and regular statistical services. The disappearance of the staff economists was not that hard to bear. Small but noticeable tensions between staff and the board had been accumulating. The board did not approve of staff publishing scholarly papers; many volunteers felt that the first plan had been inappropriately skewed by staff biases during its formative stages. In fact the service sector component was submitted to the sector as a completed document for approval.

The minutes of one meeting of the board dryly record that certain board members were assigned the task of translating the writings of the professional staff into recognizable English.

Despite some ambivalence there was also great relief when the recommendations of the special committee were approved by the board and by government. Freed from the albatrosses of statistical services and creating plans that wouldn't be implemented, VP entered the new decade. Through this crisis, the energetic work of the sectors continued unabated.

With characteristic understatement, VP's annual report of 1970 devotes as much space to a discussion of this recent crisis and transformation as it does to explaining a manufacturing sector development program sponsored by VP, or the diverse and substantial sector year-end reports. The report closes with a quotation from Rudyard Kipling, "We have forty million reasons for failure but not a single excuse."

12

Encounter Week

The first year of the new decade was a landmark one for VP. The Conservative government of G.I. Smith was replaced by the Liberal government of Gerald Regan in hotly contested provincial elections.

The special committee's report on renewal for the organization, originally designed for a government that was knowledgeable of VP but had grown inattentive, was now ready for tabling. It was presented to a new government—a new set of players less familiar with its history and perhaps less interested in the survival of VP.

In addition, an exciting and innovative experiment in participatory planning was sponsored by VP, just before the elections in early 1970, for the metro area of Halifax.

The Encounter on Urban Environment, more commonly known as "Encounter", was essentially an experiment in participatory planning that took place in Halifax in the week of February 22 to the 28, 1970. Its designers made no secret of what they planned to do with the device—a version of which had first been used at Prince Philip's 1968 Australian Conference on Industrialization and Urbanization. The event was to be a "psychological unsettling, a calculated and controlled assault on a particular society's assumptions about itself and its future" led by 12 outside experts or consultants.

Ken O. Hartnett, Encounter's official historian (a position implying the epic proportions of the event) chronicles its beginnings and how it came to VP. According to him Leonard E. Poetschke, executive secretary to the Provincial Cabinet Committee on Planning and Programs, learned of the Austra-

lian experiment from his friend and associate planner Harold Verge, a Nova Scotian who had participated in it.

> Verge told Poetschke how 12-member teams went into 20 Australian communities for a week of total immersion in urban problems. The focus of the Australian model was on the learning experience gained by team members and community leaders. It was apparent to Verge that the Australian experiment had proven a dramatically effective way to strengthen planning by drawing all the elements that make up a community into the planning process.
>
> When Poetschke joined the provincial government in June 1969, Verge's enthusiasm for the Australian experiment was still fresh in his mind.
>
> It was apparent both to him and to Harrington that Halifax was changing, that the changes were not being consciously directed according to anyone's plan, and that, in fact, the region was drifting dangerously. At the same time there seemed to be numbers of Haligonians willing to experiment, to try some new approaches, some new forms. They needed reinforcement.
>
> There remained the deep and persistent psychological climate that gripped Halifax and the Maritimes, a climate of passivity bred of a long history of defeat, a climate that shied away from change because of past experience which suggested things could grow still worse. Something, it was reasoned had to be done to change that climate in Halifax before anything else in Nova Scotia could be transformed.
>
> By the fall, Poetschke and his associates in the VP Board were toying with the idea of turning the Australian model on its head. Instead of focussing on the panelists and leaders, why not focus on the community? Harrington took the idea to the VP Board and suggested the board should be the sponsoring agency.
>
> Poetschke offered technical support and assistance through Cabinet committee staff, a group of specialized consultants referred to collectively as the Office of the Secretariat.
>
> The board responded with a unanimously favourable decision.

In theory, the Encounter process was to evolve development goals based on the social, economic, and physical

realities of the region, shaped and widely understood by the community. These would then become the reference points whereby the private and public sectors could evaluate planning, decision-making, and action.

The team of consultants were acknowledged experts in their fields—ranging from communications, labour, transportation, economics, environment, community development to tourism and social services.

The team was charged with delineating the assets and/or liabilities of metro and with proposing possible and desirable development options. In addition they were asked to suggest policies and action necessary to accomplish such options.

The daily schedule of the team was a rigorous one. It began with an early start and breakfast briefing. Then they travelled together throughout metro, meeting and having discussions with various groups—municipal government, business leaders, community organizations. The day ended with a community forum-type meeting.

At these forums the team briefly reviewed their day's findings and then opened the meeting to public discussion. The public was invited to speak its mind; at times it was challenged and prodded by the team members. In fact neither the team nor participants were restricted, and were free to engage in whatever discussion necessary to facilitate the Encounter process. Finally, team members met to "rap" over the day's findings and shape the Encounter process and their role in it further. According to Ken O. Hartnett

> The team set Halifax to talking about itself—its frustrations, its disappointments, its dashed dreams. The community also talked about its hopes for a future. In talking, the community identified its own defects and, at times, its own villains. The powerless suddenly found they had, at least for a week, a certain kind of power. The powerful found that at least for a week, their power was hedged in, their decisions subject to expert review and criticism.
>
> Predictably, the result was sometimes anger and even outrage. "Little more than a $25,000 open mouth show," was the way the Halifax Mail-Star described "Encounter" after discovering, perhaps to its surprise, that it was not well beloved by all its readers.

"Haligonians have been told ad nauseam that they are 'complacent', 'afraid of rocking the boat', 'deserve what they get', (and) live in a 'dismal city'." the newspaper said in an editorial entitled, "At Least the City Doesn't Pay."

Officials from the federal level on down had reason to share the Mail-Star's view, particularly if they were complacent about the status quo or smug about their own contributions to the society's advancement.

Before the week ended long-standing power arrangements had been, if not upset, at least exposed. So had habits of thought that kept levels of government from working together, or kept Haligonians from seeing social injustices festering before their eyes.

If one result was irritation directed at the team, another was anger and impatience at the men and systems and deeply-rooted patterns of thought that governed Nova Scotia.

It soon became clear to the 12 just how powerful an instrument the Encounter process had proven to be. It had indeed produced openings for change in a hard-shelled and change resisting society.

In fact, team member Konrad Studnicki-Gizbert felt a revolutionary medium had been born in Halifax.

"It may be the most powerful medium ever devised politically," Studnicki-Gizbert said.

The Chairman of VP drew the Encounter proceedings to a close with the following words:

Ladies and Gentlemen, we feel we should send you as a group home dissatisfied as we try to continue on with this program and develop some of the inherent paths that seem to be defined, but yet not quite defined, unless you still have something to say and we stop you now, we won't get your cooperation in the future and we dearly need that.

13

Encounter's Impact

Night after night, during Encounter Week, the citizens of Halifax and the metro area crowded into public halls to protest, to criticize and complain. The many hours of transcripts, recorded day by day, reveal periods of boredom punctuated by incredible human drama—outbursts of pain and frustration.

Conservative elements within VP, feeling that Encounter had gone too far, agreed with Dr. Benjamin Higgins (team member and specialist in planning economic development). He said "like the rest [I] wonder whether much will come out of it [Encounter] in terms of permanent improvements in this area. But it's quite clear that as a device for getting something moving in the way of public discussion, it's very powerful." He admitted that during the week he had feared that Encounter might become too powerful because of the unknowns, "It's just something we don't know too much about."

Was Encounter's ultimate meaning the programs that followed it? Or was it a Pandora's box that left as its legacy a series of questions and challenges by a newly aware public?

Encounter showed the bravery and dignity of the people of Halifax. It also shook "the establishment". Some Conservative politicians later said that they felt it contributed to their loss of the election that year. Within VP some felt that the events had gone too far, that staff were indirectly responsible for this and should be disciplined.

Yet, in the metro area, there was a new sense of vigour and optimism as if the irreparable tear in the fabric of silence

had released a new vision and a new set of possibilities. A number of metro area agencies such as the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission sprang up in the wake of Encounter. An umbrella organization for citizens' action groups was formed known as MOVE.

As a powerful, concentrated act of social planning, Encounter probably has never been equalled anywhere. It was a logistical nightmare which, even in the face of a bomb threat (coolly handled by Russ Harrington), went off smoothly.

There is no doubt that it was a success. In many ways, the week of February 22 to February 28, 1970 contributed immensely to the City of Halifax and the Province of Nova Scotia we now enjoy.

The usefulness of the VP organization appeared to be drawing to a close as the provincial election brought to power the Liberal Government of Gerald Regan. At that point it appeared as if Encounter was the last explosive act of VEP to those involved. They did not know then that it would also be the energetic birth of a socially conscious new Voluntary Planning.

If the end was coming it was at least with a bang rather than a whimper.

14

The Dark Days

There is nothing harder than the softness of indifference.

—Juan Montalvo

The tremendous fallout from Encounter Week alerted VP to the growing interest that the general public felt in participating in planning and government. There was much in the way of follow-up, particularly in the fields of education and media relations, where there was interest in "mini encounters," as well in the Pictou area where municipal amalgamation was being considered.

VP proposed an institute that would train "Encounter-type" community developers in the skills necessary to this kind of political and community interest. VP staff enthusiastically took part in the attempts to launch what seemed the quintessential expression of the spirit of self-determination and social responsibility of the times. To the disappointment of many the idea of an institute was a hot potato. It died when it failed to receive federal funding.

In 1970 and soon after Encounter, the new premier, Gerald Regan, met with the board to hear about the new mandate it had chosen for itself—and he was officially encouraging. Some 22 important and outstanding recommendations were brought to his attention during the meeting. It was an uncomfortable board, however, that listened to two of its suggestions endorsed, a handful postponed for further consideration and the remainder shelved or rejected. It was an indicator of things to come for the next few years.

VP's chairman Russ Harrington was known to be associated with the Conservative Party. The notion of voluntary planning had been conceived by a Conservative government. The new government approached VP with an understandable wariness.

In spite of the almost compulsive care with which VP kept its deliberations and membership free from partisan politics, and the fact that its recommendations were made at arms-length to the government, the association was sufficient to generate suspicion. The new government was polite and encouraging but rarely actually approached VP for advice until well into the mid-seventies.

During 1971 and into 1972 a special committee was struck to prepare a submission to the Graham Commission report on education, public services and provincial-municipal relations. Special committee chairman Ray Carmen recalls the written material was piled chest high on an average size person. VP was also occupied with other interests at this time ranging from Maritime Union; self-government for the four institutes of technology; forest improvement legislation; licencing of chauffeurs; tidal power; foreign ownership; land-use planning; training of housewives for the tourism industry; consumer education; free trade; pulpwood marketing; and the international market for minerals. And these represent only a small percentage of those handled.

VP has always been tremendously busy. There was a period, however, in the early and middle seventies during which a sense of anomie and listlessness penetrated some of the sector committees. Commensurate with its new purpose the board found itself in 1970 at a disadvantage with the new provincial government of Gerald Regan.

Membership dwindled and in some sectors enthusiasm waned. Known within VP as the Dark Days, they continued until 1976 and the return of the Conservative Government of John Buchanan.

Throughout this period, however, the sectors remained busy. The sense of isolation from government did not apply to every sector either. Several Cabinet ministers looked on the organization favourably and turned to it regularly for advice. But only in the last years of Liberal government was VP able to return to its strong position.

An evaluation of the sectors was subsequently carried out. It chronicles the effects of a government freeze on VP staff as well as the general lack of government response. A transfer from the Department of Finance where VP had been located

since its creation to the Department of Development (then known as Industry and Trade) was not particularly beneficial either. The loss of the research staff had a serious effect on the scope of operations and the shortage of sector coordinators was crippling.

The special committee of the board originally struck in 1970 was reconstructed in 1972 to bring the board under scrutiny and ensure that its connection with the "grass roots" remained intact and vital. The committee urged that youth be involved on the board; it also outlined the board's composition and representation—sectorally, professionally and geographically—and recommended maximum membership of 50.

With the official release of the terms of reference of the new Department of Development, VP's relationship with the department came under discussion. VP minutes record that, "It ranged in tone from general acceptance to strong opposition, at least to some of the provisions—particularly those placing sector secretaries under the Industry Operations Branch and dividing their loyalties and responsibilities between Industry Operations and VP."

The chairman stated that the loyalties of sector secretaries must be to VP so that they would be free to pass on to their committees whatever information they were able to uncover without having to make a confidentiality judgment before doing so.

The minutes also record the observation that sector secretaries were the heart and soul of the VP organization and they must be independent. If they were placed in the position where they couldn't reveal all the relevant information they had, their committee's confidence in them would be undermined. Concern was also expressed that under the new structure, political control could be exercised over the staff function.

It was resolved that

> Sector Secretaries (Coordinators) must always take their chairman into their complete confidence and they both must make a judgement as to whether or not any sensitive information should be revealed to the entire committee

concerned and if so, when.

Sector secretaries must be responsible only to the Board but available to the Department of Development on request and at the Board's pleasure.

On the other hand, it was generally agreed that the new structure would greatly help liaison within the Department of Development, and that the transfer of VP's economic data and analysis staff to another branch of the department was acceptable providing VP staff could still have unrestricted access to their services.

Differences in opinion were expressed as to whether the best prospects for recommendations would be when they were submitted through the operating departmental organization or directly to the senior level of government. However, it was generally agreed that what was needed most was good access to Cabinet backed up by good technical service and supporting cooperation on the part of the appropriate operating department.

If the board was apprehensive it was understandable. It had lost its primary planning role though it had served almost single handedly to legitimize the place of planning in government operations. It had fought for and won a new role for itself in spite of an uneasy relationship with its benefactor. Its staff had been usurped by the civil service to a point approaching administrative bankruptcy.

The anxiety proved unfounded. Its new role as planner and activist for the private sector and advisor to the government on financial matters gave it a new sense of purpose.

As VP pursued its broader mandate in the seventies, particularly through the forestry sector and issues in land use planning, it began to recognize the complexity of ecological issues. This way of thinking was focused for VP too by its discussions involving development of the Port Hawkesbury/Canso Strait Area and the Port of Halifax as well as its involvement with the Man and His Resources Conference sponsored by the federal government.

In 1972 the 10 sectors of VP participated in the national program sponsored by the Canadian Council of Resource and Environmental Ministers. In the course of 13 meetings more than 200 representatives wrestled with the issues of conserva-

tion and the management of renewable and nonrenewable resources. The outcome, besides an increased awareness within VP of the issue, was support for a planned and coordinated program of resource management, a recognition of the need for emphasis on public education and support for the Environmental Protection Act, and the establishment of a committee to review draft proposals of legislation under that Act.

VP also responded to the Graham Commission's Report on Education, Public Service and Provincial Municipal Relations. After 95 meetings, involving some 1,000 volunteers, VP submitted a report to the Graham Commission in 1972 when it was doing its research. Ten new committees had been formed within VP to adequately address the issues. Two years later when the findings of the Commission were made public VP responded with its comments focussed primarily on education. The response was 235 pages in length.

If its role as advisor to government was lessened somewhat in the Dark Days of the seventies, VP turned its efforts wholeheartedly to working with the private sector.

This meant putting into practice its broader mandate to go beyond economic issues in planning and to explore social and environmental ones. Indeed, during this period several of the non-economic sectors such as Health Care and later the Land Resources Coordinating Committee were established. One example of this out-reaching was a lengthy report prepared for the Nova Scotia Council on Health and presented in January of 1974.

Through 1974 and 1975 VP continued steadily with its work, gradually accumulating favorable responses from ministers and bureaucrats within the provincial and, in some cases, federal governments for its work on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), unemployment insurance, and particularly in the areas of tourism, agriculture, fisheries, metric conversion and industrial development.

VP had patiently demonstrated its worth to Cabinet and some of the early suspicion on the part of the government was diminishing. However, there persisted a feeling within VP that its work was hindered by a lack of profile with MLAs and the public at large.

In 1973 a report was submitted to the board proposing that since the province had developed greatly since 1965 and the first plan, the social contract would also have changed among its people.

The report suggested

> These matters were considered before by the VP organization and set out in its First Plan. The general and specific goals set out then were basically economic. These focused [on] improving the standard of living to be achieved through higher rates of growth, higher employment, higher productivity, efficient development of resources and healthy political climate. The social value of these goals were [sic] seen to rest in the greater freedom which would flow from an economic security, freedom to pursue health, recreational, welfare, educational and cultural activities.
>
> It is not suggested by anyone that these objectives are less valid than they were in 1966. What is being said is that we should update, refer and restate these objectives in the light of our experience with the planning process and in relation to important considerations pressing upon us. The latter include such things as good environmental management, land ownership and use, future energy requirements and energy sources, the impact of major new industrial developments.
>
> The task before the VP organization is two fold:
> (1) to define the long-range objectives and goals of Nova Scotia as a social and economic entity.
> (2) to back up the stated goals with practical operating proposals that will demonstrate how Nova Scotia citizens might modify their social and economic activities to approach their goals.

This new approach was not intended to create a plan that government might adopt—that goal had been established as unreasonable—but rather to prepare a vision of the future that would be a guide to the private sector and, to some extent, government. It was to "provide a central framework against which we [VP] could from time to time measure other specific proposals." The board considered that there was still no benchmark position on goals and objectives for the provincial economy. The project was supposed to provide such a consensus.

In the face of the diversity of issues facing the board, the need for a new consensus was apparent. Examples of some current issues on which VP was taking positions were unemployment, energy policy, non-resident land ownership, forest policy, fisheries policy, highway routing, agricultural development and land use. Funding of $50,000 for the project was requested from the provincial government. It was to be the major undertaking of 1974.

Questionnaires were distributed, canvassing the opinions of all members of VP and requesting contributions. The questions suggested for consideration were familiar ones, echoing a number of concerns expressed in the first plan: Was the concept of "Growth Centre" a feasible one? Should tourism be encouraged? and various other questions relating to land tenure.

15

Ensuring Its Grass-Roots Connection

The Way Ahead project was slowed down in debate through 1975 but the need for vision and renewal was still alive on the board. When government funding for the project was not forthcoming in 1975/76, a local consultant, Mr. Len Giffen, prepared a special annual report which would incorporate a brief history of VP and make some recommendations about long-term directions for the organization.

The report was frank. It recognized the successful effort that had been made to reaffirm VP's connection to the grass roots but urged that more be done.

The thorny problem of labour's participation could not be ignored. VP's first two vice chairmen were labour leaders and throughout VP's history important contributions had been made by individuals distinguished in the labour field. For an organization that had as its credo "a partnership of labour business and government", however, labour's active participation was sorely lacking. While initially labour/management advice was considered adequate (through an arrangement with the Joint Labour Management Study Committee from Dalhousie University), over time its contribution at either the sector or board level was not significant.

VP lost the trust of labour during the issue of coal and steel production in Cape Breton, acquiring a government or quasi-government image. And labour could not readily relate to VP's ideal of consensus as it had, through circumstance, become accustomed to negotiating solutions through confrontation and the leverage of power to a large extent.

The report called for the strengthening of labour's involvement as well as the involvement of women.

Women's contributions to the sectors, though signific-

ant, were few. The board resolved to involve women in all of its areas. A general rotation of membership to maintain a well-spring of new ideas and enthusiasm was suggested, and with it a public relations effort that would put a more public face on the organization, through a brochure and public meetings. The end of the report, phased in a characteristically understated way, contains this note:

> with one notable exception, there is no record of public acknowledgement or a statement of support on behalf of government for the process over the past eight years. It has been a boot strap operation carried on by concerned people who consider that the process has something of real worth to contribute.

Public meetings were held around the province to improve public relations. During this period the problems of spruce budworm infestation brought controversy and a sense of urgency to VP, in a way that was almost reminiscent of the coal and steel days of the early sixties. And while this was an immediate issue, it was one that also directed discussion toward long-term, integrated planning.

The Department of Development was reorganized during this period as government confronted higher inflation, and energy supplies became a problem and a commonplace topic for discussion.

A movement within the membership in 1977, recalling the report of 1975, called for a stronger and more active executive to conduct membership reviews, for a rotation of executive members, for more and better communication between the board and the sectors, and for action on the clearly identified need for a new long-range planning initiative.

In 1977 the Executive Director of VP proposed to the board that the Way Ahead project be revived. After much debate it was deferred once again as a different view of long-range planning began to emerge within VP and the work of the revitalized Energy Sector seemed to be of cross-sectoral and long-range concern.

16

Energy 1990

It was beginning to appear, in 1976–77, that the energy crisis was the most uncertain and important planning issue of the time. A mood was also emerging that offshore oil and gas held the promise of economic prosperity for the province, and in many ways problems of economic underdevelopment would become problems of the avoidance of economic overdevelopment.

The mid-seventies in the western world were characterized by drastic reductions in the production and refinement of crude oil. A general belief prevailed that the energy crisis and high energy costs in particular were endemic and likely to remain so for a significant period of time.

The whole notion of planning seemed inextricably interwoven with available energy supplies. It was entirely rational then, that as the sentiments of VP came to reflect the ubiquitous sense of uncertainty and helplessness of the time, that the need for a new look at the long term become synonymous with an examination of the uncertain state of energy in Nova Scotia.

In April of 1977 an outline proposal was prepared for an energy-related project. It was based on the premise that every aspect of life in Nova Scotia was deeply affected by changes in the cost and general availability of energy sources and technology. Essentially the study was designed to be a comprehensive plan for the private sector.

According to the proposal, the energy and mining sectors would jointly look ahead to 1990 and prepare their best predictions on the status of energy. These predictions would be circulated to other sectors, following board approval, who would then deliberate on the impact of findings on the issues of concern within their own sectors.

The transportation sector would assess the impact of energy on all modes of transport; these findings would be of value to the fisheries sector in studying the possible implications to the declaration of a 200-mile limit.

In light of the importance of transportation to tourism, forestry and agriculture those sectors could then make use of the input of the energy and transportation sectors. They would also update the VP position on land-use policy.

The construction sector would be directly concerned with the outcome of the energy proposal as it related to standards, insulation and construction methods in support of conservation.

The consumers group would have considerable interest in the findings and the Education Advisory Council would be concerned primarily with the manpower training implications of each sector study submitted to the board.

The Energy 1990 Report process did much to articulate the importance of cross-sectoral issues and consultation within VP. Its findings were well received and passed easily through the board, as did a subsequent update of the report discussing energy needs in 1995.

The economic optimism of the time brought with it both an eagerness to structure the great economic leaps forward to come in oil and gas and to resolve questions being raised about the potential effects of development not only ecologically but on the fabric of the social contract in Nova Scotia.

17

The White Paper

George McClure, Deputy Minister of Development at this time, contacted VP's Chairman, Russ Harrington, and Executive Director, Doug MacDonald, with a project in 1979. It was a planning process, a development strategy for the province emphasizing economic and business expansion but with a broader sweep than that. It would encompass "developmental planning"—a now familiar term for VP—recognizing the interconnectedness of all sectors of the economy as well as the quality, strength and vigor of daily life. Would VP be interested?

VP was very interested, but circumspect about the feasibility of such an undertaking. Detailed negotiations between VP and the Department of Development provided a workable process acceptable to both parties and the first meeting launching the enterprise was convened.

This enterprise would embody the spirit of the Way Ahead project, which had twice been deferred, more than the Energy 1990 report had. At last VP would be returning to integrated long-term planning.

In 1963, VP had prepared a plan which was not implemented by government. Subsequently, the government prepared a plan which had not been recognized by the private sector. The Way Ahead was the recognition of the need for partnership, cooperation and synchronization that would fuse the interests of both groups. This development strategy had the potential to be the vehicle that gave expression to this need. It could boost the quality of planning in the province.

The Strategic Planning Section of the Development Strategy Division, within the Department of Development, prepared status reports on all sectors of the economy considered relevant. (The fact that a whole division was named for

the strategy indicates just how serious and lengthy an undertaking this was.) It was decided that primary sectors would be excluded. These reports were then circulated to the sectors of VP for their comment and criticism.

The relationship between these two groups was interesting. Although none of the original personnel remained, the civil service planners were the positional descendants of the same planners who had helped the VP volunteers create the first plan. This group had once been part of VP, surgically removed with the change of mandate in 1970. Now they returned to the meeting table to develop a planning strategy once again. This time, however, they represented the interests of government. And this time the formula was correct. This time VP listened as much as it spoke and advised rather than proclaimed.

It was an undertaking of huge proportions and great complexity. Limited staff resources were available. There were many, many points upon which there could be disagreement and about a thousand participants who might disagree.

The overall objective was stated:

> Strategy Planning involves an ordered and rigorous look to the future, a careful ranking of issues and problems by order of importance and a deliberation of policy options to ensure that future economic returns are maximized in a manner consistent with other social goals. Such a process enables businesses and the community to more rationally and intelligently order their own affairs so that the objectives of both can be better achieved. It is a cooperative rather than a dictated effort.

Strategic directions for the plan were decided upon:

- self-reliance
- redirection of development policies and programs from hardware and infrastructure toward:
  - productivity improvement
  - management development
  - manpower needs identification, training and development
  - technological innovation and adoption of new products and process
  - marketing and trade development.

A Development Strategy Core Committee was struck, chaired by Dr. David Large, to coordinate the process with the help of resource people from the department and, to a lesser extent, Policy Board. Though committee membership waxed and waned, the group basically consisted of the following people:

David Large
Pat Ellis
Dean Hennigar
Bob Cocks
Len Perry
Wayne Thorbourne
Allan Shaw
James Harrison
Lester Settle
Peter Wilson
Art Colliver
Reg MacAusland
Richard Shaffner
Rusty McLelland
Brenda Gorman-Wright

The meetings were tough and there were many of them. Past Director of VP, Lance Hale, who became Executive Director during the process, experienced it from both sides—as a staff member and as a volunteer. He recalls it as a bridge that spanned initial disagreement and mistrust. Professionalism and commitment on both sides of the table brought the barriers down. By all accounts, it was difficult, but positive. Though it was not the perfect planning process, it produced a strong document—an expression of the best process available.

The absence of a service sector and of planning coordination within the civil service; ad hoc policy making within line departments; federal/provincial jurisdictions; existing planning strategies within some sectors—these were some of the problems a new planning initiative such as this one had to confront in day-to-day government practices and in some of the planning initiatives already in place within VP.

Civil servants prepared a discussion paper, the Green Paper, from the positions arrived at during consultation with the sectors.

The Green Paper reflected the original thrust of the process: to examine the opportunities for government intervention—the way in which government programs and policy could enhance economic development. While it looked broadly out over the provincial economy it did so primarily from a government policy point of view.

The publishing of the Green Paper on May 16, 1980 brought a feeling of accomplishment and relief to those involved. It was a feeling that proved to be short lived.

The Green Paper process educated both sides of the table; attitudes toward policy had changed. The idea that government policy alone would solve the problems that beset the economy was rejected. Several weaknesses were identified in the business sector: the way that business conducted business in the province, its antiquated methods and inadequately exploited resources. Government, too, had to accept its shortcomings in policy and programming.

The private sector called out for government to help business become more effective in the market place.

The contents of the Green Paper can be summarized as follows:

- problems in the areas of tariffs, energy costs and transportation could be overcome
- Nova Scotia manufacturing was potentially competitive internationally
- small business was the primary focus for economic development
- policy should shift from building up hardware and facilities to enhancing skills and productivity. (The general economic climate for the '80's was not positive.)
- obsolescence in several sectors of the province's economy was a significant problem
- the proximity to the ocean and ocean research and a location on world trade routes were assets to be built upon
- the delivery of business support programs was confusing and lacked efficiency. This should be remedied.
- marketing of products and services was inadequate
- a renewed stress on manufacturing was vital.

The problems of weakness in management, marketing and productivity were identified in all sectors of the economy. Consequently VP threw itself once more into a difficult period of debate and problem-solving with the staff of the Department of Development taking the initiative. From this came the proposal for a White Paper subtitled "Building Competitiveness".

The final draft of the White Paper was approved by VP on May 26, 1983 and then taken to Cabinet by a committee of three MLAs. It later received final governmental approval.

The White Paper stated that the focus of the development strategy was competitiveness, not new economic programs. The key to raising employment opportunities and incomes lay in improving the position of Nova Scotia firms in local, Canadian and International markets. The government's role would be two-fold:

- to improve the business environment through procurement policies, regulation, taxation, information, etc.
- strengthening human resources by concentrating on manpower initiatives, entrepreneurship and management.

The White Paper's plan was built on a number of discussion papers, some of which dealt with specific sections:

- Toward an Economic Development Strategy for N.S.: A Green Paper
- Tourism Development Strategy
- Report of the Task Force on Research and Technological Innovation
- Marketing and Trade
- Management Development
- Focus on Manpower: A Blueprint for Action
- Transportation Development Strategy
- Small Business Development in Nova Scotia.

It was, however, more a framework for development in all sectors.

The private sector strongly supported the White Paper, to which VP had contributed (VP estimated) 3,244 volunteer hours in meetings alone (excluding reading, research and preparation for meetings). A subcommittee of Policy Board was struck to review the strategy and, it was hoped, ease its passage through Policy Board and Cabinet. The committee consisted of three MLAs: John Leefe, David Nantes and George Moody with support staff from the Civil Service and VP.

With the energetic support of this committee and with the strong presence of the Minister of Development, Roland Thornhill, the White Paper was officially released by the Premier of Nova Scotia and the Minister of Development on February 10, 1984.

An important part of the White Paper proposal was the suggestion that VP should monitor the measures taken to implement the recommendations of the White Paper. In 1984, the CORE Committee that had overseen the process to this point was assigned this task. On the government's side an implementation committee was struck, consisting of the Hon. Mel Pickings, the Hon. Ron Russell, chaired by the Hon. Roland Thornhill. By October 19, 1984 when the committee released a report on action taken, 31 out of 35 of the White Paper recommendations had been implemented.

18

Cross-Sectoral Interests

While VP continues to produce valuable and innovative work within its primary economic sectors, of particular and increasingly vital interest are the sectors and committees of cross-sectoral interest.

The new mandate of 1970, which allowed VP to explore the social and environmental components of economic planning, also required a new definition of sectors. Sectors were needed to build bridges between the basic economic divisions.

Thus, by the early seventies Advisory Councils in Citizen Participation, Safety, Consumer Affairs, Education and Industrial Relations had been or were part of VP. Later on, through the seventies, Taxation, Human Resources, Health and Energy sectors were formed as the complexities of the modern economy made them necessary.

The early eighties brought significant changes to the make-up of VP with the death of Executive Director Doug MacDonald and the retirement of long-time Chairman Russ Harrington. The new Chairman, Allan Shaw (present Chairman of VP), had served as Chairman of the Manufacturing Sector, the Integrated Forest Management Committee and was involved with the Vocational Education Study.

Many of the activities and positions held within VP at this time were inspired by a belief that offshore oil and gas development was on the horizon. A successful Offshore Oil and Gas Seminar in 1981 was part of the role VP assumed in bringing people together and informing them on economic matters. Economic Conferences, established initially as The Businessman's Conference in 1975, gave the sectors an opportunity to forecast on the performance of the economy and comment on the year past. In 1983, VP handed over spon-

sorship of the conference to the Halifax Board of Trade and the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council. In that year all sectors, with the exception of Tourism and Fisheries, were predicting substantial gains.

Culmination of this education function for VP came in 1985 when at the request of the Premier, VP played an important role in the organization of a Conference On The Economy held in the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax. About 150 delegates were chosen from a wide range of locations within the provincial economy. Assigned to sector-by-sector workshops, and armed with information on the economy provided by the Department of Development, the delegates, after much discussion and debate prepared recommendations and suggestions for the government to help the economy grow. The two-day conference was an intense consultative and information dispersal process. It was generally considered a success.

The establishment of the Land Resources Coordinating Committee (LRCC, later Council) provided a focus on some issues of cross-sectoral interest. Initially this was in recognition of the need for dialogue to resolve conflict between landowners and landusers and particularly around the issues of trespass, vandalism and the development of a petty trespass Act.

LRCC's most significant contribution, perhaps, beyond its efforts to educate the public to responsible land use, has been its participation in developing legislation to protect landowners' rights in balance with landusers' needs for recreation, to regulate the use of off-highway vehicles, and (in the future) a workable occupiers' liability insurance. LRCC's rapid growth within VP and its success in resolving disagreement among landusers and landowners is testimony to the need for a cross-sectoral approach to planning and problem solving.

In mid-1985 the federal government appointed a Committee of Inquiry, known generally as the Forget Commission, to study the Unemployment Insurance System. In order to respond to this initiative the VP Board struck a committee chaired by Mr. Ray Carmen. Meetings were held in Truro, Coldbrook, Sydney and Truro, sponsored by the Manufactur-

ing Sector to gather the ideas of the sectors. Agriculture and Tourism were well represented at the meetings. The Fisheries Sector could not agree with some of the recommendations—particularly those relating to seasonal employment. The recommendations were reworked and resubmitted to the board.

To make a significant contribution to the National Task Force on Environment and Economy, established by the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers in October 1986, the VP Board struck a special committee in July 1988. The work of the committee has yet to begin, but its mandate is to examine the dimensions of sustainable development within a context of safe environmental practice and to develop a strategy for implementing the National Task Force recommendations for Nova Scotia. The general goal of the committee is to ensure that environmental considerations are reflected in the deliberations of all of VP's resource and economic sector groups.

Above all others, perhaps, and on a level with the White Paper Development Strategy, the work of this committee embodies the cross-sectoral concerns that typify the new and emerging concerns of VP. Its work will run the gamut of opportunities for environmental improvement—from performance principles for industrial managers to conflict resolution.

In late 1987, after support for Free Trade in general was ratified by the board with reservations expressed on certain aspects of the agreement (particularly with regard to agriculture), the board agreed to establish a committee of key people to identify areas of adjustment should the agreement materialize.

The mandate of the Special Committee on Free Trade is to identify the government policies and measures that will be required as a result of the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, to maximize the opportunities created for Nova Scotians and to minimize the negative impact.

VP is ideally situated in terms of its membership, its sector composition, and its special quasi-government status to handle issues such as these. Through recognized lines of communication the Free Trade Committee will ensure that it does

not duplicate the work of Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Federal Free Trade Committee. Because the Nova Scotia Advisory Adjustment Council does not represent full sectoral concerns, VP will capture and funnel information and recommendations into adjustment committees at the provincial and federal levels. Through its unique structure and geographical representation, VP has been able to provide the Premier with private sector opinion through a series of province-wide consultations on Free Trade.

The first task of the special committee was to question the sectors on their assessment of the impact of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with regards to:

- the availability of information on the impacts of the FTA
- the sectors' current competitive position
- the anticipated impact of the FTA
- the adjustments required.

After this information is compiled, the committee in conjunction with the sectors will study existing government programs and initiatives in light of the adjustment process and investigate provincial trade barriers and approaches to regional development.

The latter part of the 1980s have brought a gradual rather than sudden sense of internal change within VP. The speed with which the world communicates has precipitated change at a rapidly accelerating rate. It is not unusual, then, that VP, in contact with the fibrillating nature of that change should, as its twenty-fifth year approached, want to take a long hard look at the way it has done its job.

19

On-Site Analysis

In June 1987, Mr. Allan Shaw, Chairman of the Board, presented a proposal to conduct an evaluation of VP to the Executive Committee.

He outlined a convincing case for a review, at this time.

- 1988 will mark twenty-five years of operations; it is timely and healthy that Voluntary Planning evaluate its effectiveness; and analyze the future relevance of the organization.
- Voluntary Planning must be accountable to its members, government, constituent organizations and the taxpayer. Not only does the organization on a regular basis need to justify its funding, Voluntary Planning must also justify to its volunteers that their efforts, investment of time and involvement as well as lost time from their own work are well spent.
- Over the 25 years, Voluntary Planning has evolved, people have come and gone. The organization requires time for reflection; rebuilding; clarity and agreement on the mission, culture and corporate identity of Voluntary Planning. This should also involve a review of the role and partnership of volunteers and staff.
- Recent years have marked the creation of a number of advisory bodies/councils. What does this mean to Voluntary Planning? Has the organization been forgotten, overlooked? Has Voluntary Planning lost credibility? Has it quietly assumed a lesser role? These questions must be addressed if we are to continue and as we strive to be more effective.
- It is ultimately the responsibility of the board to ensure that the organization is efficiently managed and that its activities are effective. The board, executive committee, members and staff must take this opportunity to step back from the day to day maze of distracting and involving details to analyze the global issues, identify strengths

and capacities that must be considered in establishing the future direction, goals and effectiveness of Voluntary Planning.

Having addressed the question of why VP should engage in evaluation, Mr. Shaw recommended contacting Mr. Len Giffen to lead an "On-Site Analysis". Mr. Shaw said that he had first-hand experience with this process through the United Way. The United Way of Halifax-Dartmouth Metro On-Site Analysis (1986) formed the basis of the VP evaluation.

On-site analysis is the name given to a problem-solving model developed by Robert J. Myers and introduced by him as a program of United Way/Centraide Canada in 1979. It is a process whereby people doing similar work in other organizations join the staff in an organization to help them analyze their operations on site. Together they assess organizational performance, discover and priorize problems, and develop solutions. It is an extensive and challenging process that involves the people in the organization in every step of assessment and problem-solving.

Mr. Shaw's proposal was discussed at ensuing meetings and was finally approved and commissioned for January 1988.

Three trained on-site consultants (including and led by Len Giffen) joined a full complement of VP staff and four volunteers. Ten volunteers were also interviewed by the visiting team. Approximately 40 people attended the presentation. Following the on-site presentation the team went on the road and toured the sectors.

The on-site process involved five and one half days and four nights of working together: researching, analyzing, probing, formulating, challenging, flipcharting, writing, rehearsing and presenting. The team leader took the participants through a maze of numbers and a barrage of questions and systematically led the team through the basic steps in the on-site process. On-site members felt confused, challenged, pushed, probed, frustrated, claustrophobic, exhausted. They also experienced a sense of being part of a team, and finally a climactic high. The VP staff, obviously experienced and talented writers, were able to write a final 68-page report in record time. The report contained a five-year global and sector

analysis, charts, observations, conclusions, identification of problems, possible solutions and recommendations. It was condensed to a seven-page Executive Summary for circulation to the members. For the purpose of this publication, it is not necessary to detail the recommendations.

Perhaps the most telling statement made during the on-site analysis was that, "while VP contained the word 'planning' in its name, it did not do organizational planning, as a matter of course."

The history of VP demonstrates the ebb and flow of organizational planning activity. However, the on-site analysis pointed out the need to integrate organizational planning—long-range and operational (and all that it involves)—into the culture of VP. It also identified the excellent position VP enjoyed and urged the organization to maximize the important and unique relationship it enjoyed with government.

The importance of developing an effective communication strategy was also highlighted. The report said that VP must be known, understood and respected in order to be used, and to attract and involve key private, non-government sector participants. Internal communications flow was considered equally important.

On-site proponents boast of "positive results within a year following completion of the On-Site". It is difficult to evaluate implementation of the recommendations as not a full year has yet gone by. However, the level of activity generated from the on-site analysis is most impressive.

20

On-Site Results

By March, 1988 members were drafting sector plans. By May, the board approved the 1988–89 Business Plan and developed five board priorities. As a point of interest, the five board priorities approved at that time were: environment and economy; free trade adjustments; matters relating to government fiscal management; membership review; and 25-year renewal. Not only has this exercise focused the efforts, and resources of VP, it has also clarified the sum of VP's operational activities.

As one of its five priorities, the board commissioned a membership review. The review included a clarification of mission, VP Board and Executive Committee mandate, responsibility, structure, size, and operating policies.

It was assigned to a special committee of the board with input from the Executive Committee, VP members and staff. The resulting Bylaws and Memorandum of Operations has contributed to clarity and agreement on the mission, as well as culture and corporate identity of VP. The committee analyzed board composition, vacancies, and recruitment requirements. It also identified and recruited (with Executive and Board Approval) key individuals representative of the broadly based views of the private, non-government sector on a province-wide basis to balance the board composition.

Staff job descriptions have been reviewed and redrafted. Closer attention has been paid to data collection. 1987–88 VP activity data has been added to the five-year global and sector analysis. The process of data collection, analysis and observation and conclusions is recognized as integral to planning.

The board and executive committee meetings have become somewhat more expedient, adopting a full, but more

directed agenda style. As background to the 1988–89 Operational Planning, the Executive Committee and Sector Chairman invited Cabinet Secretariat to highlight the Government Strategic Priorities and indicate issues on which government might seek VP involvement. This meeting was an excellent opportunity to establish a process involving VP in the analysis of government planning issues during their development.

The format, jointly agreed upon by VP and government, involves an annual meeting of sectors with Ministers and the VP Chairman with the Premier. It is scheduled to coincide with the close-off of the VP programs' cycle and with the timing of start-up of government department planning process. This will in no way substitute for VP's regular correspondence and meetings with the Premier, Ministers, and departments.

This forum is designed for VP to make constructive presentation of sector analysis on planning issues. It is also a two-way communications, follow-up process. The meeting of the Chairman with the Premier is an excellent opportunity to strengthen VP's profile and credibility with the Premier.

VP has kicked-off a communications strategy. As might be expected, there are a number of pieces to the strategy:

- the format of the annual report has been revised to a corporate format
- an orientation session has been designed for new members
- a handbook has been developed for orientation of new members and as a handout to government departments, other individuals, groups, etc. This handbook provides a single source of information on the objectives and activities of the organization.

VP is considering the development of audio/visual materials to aid in these approaches.

This communications strategy includes a detailed critical path aimed at elevating awareness of VP within targeted VP constituents. VP must be, and be seen to be, effective and credible.

As in every effective communication plan, this strategy involves extensive research and preparation including: analysis of VP's constituency; targeting of specific individuals, groups; pre-identification of their interest, concern and perceptions; preparing the message; arranging for the approp-

riate spokesperson; scheduling; delivery; and followup. While this strategy spans a specific timetable, the process of communicating and maintaining VP is a priority and a continuous function.

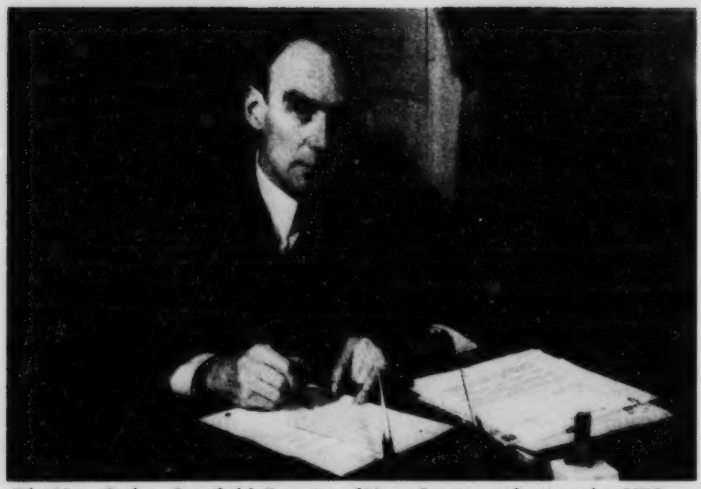
VP has had a long-term commitment to government relations. The By-Laws and Memorandum of Operations contain a detailed section on this relationship. This section of the By-Laws has been designed to enhance our relationship and communication flow with government while maintaining its arm's length, non-partisan relationship to government.

As well as a planned approach to communicating with government and constituent groups, VP recognizes that effective internal two-way communication is essential. The board, sectors, and staff must operate from a common vision. This can only occur through information-sharing, involvement, consultation and trust. The board, through By-Laws, is charged with the responsibility to track and followup on recommendations forwarded to government and to communicate progress to sectors.

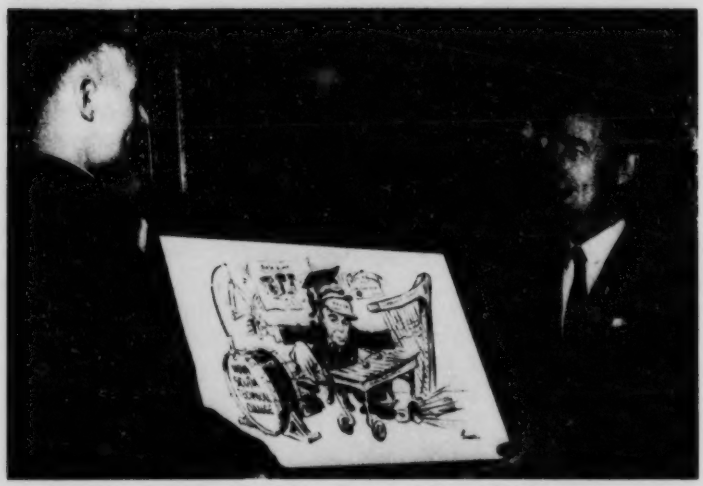
The on-site analysis brought to the forefront both the positive and negative aspects of VP from a global perspective. At the sectoral level, the on-site analysis stimulated sector self-analysis and will continue to do so as the organization attempts to keep pace with the changing times. The Professional Services Industry (PSI) Sector, with board sanction, has recently carried out a mini review. Other sectors are also examining their mandates and membership, with the expectation of becoming more effective and more representative of their particular industry.

It all looks and sounds great! Certainly the spirit of optimism and excitement is evident. There is still much to be done. The actual success must be demonstrated and measured. However, it is safe to say that VP is preparing for change.

The first meetings of VEP were more formal than today's are. The organization's more direct ties to government are clear from the locale.

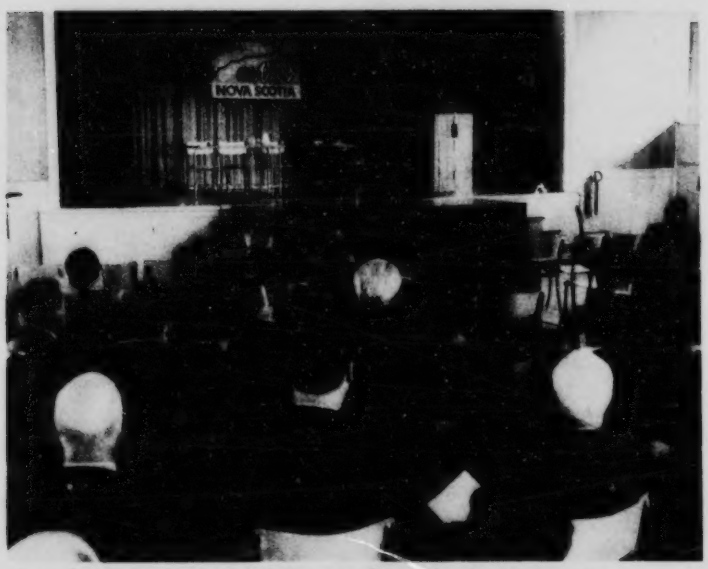


The Hon. Robert Stanfield, Premier of Nova Scotia, at the time that VEP was established.

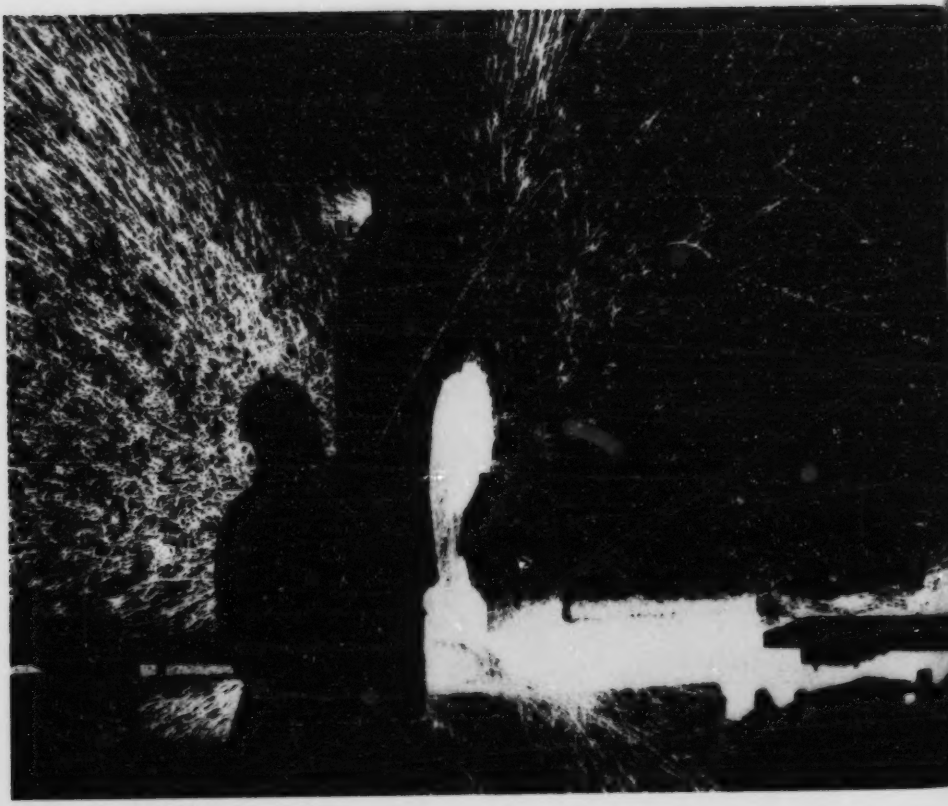


During the early years of VEP, Vice Chairman Rev. J.N. MacNeil, on behalf of the Board, presents Chairman Russ Harrington with a Chambers cartoon celebrating his many achievements. Mr. Harrington was chairman from 1963–1981.

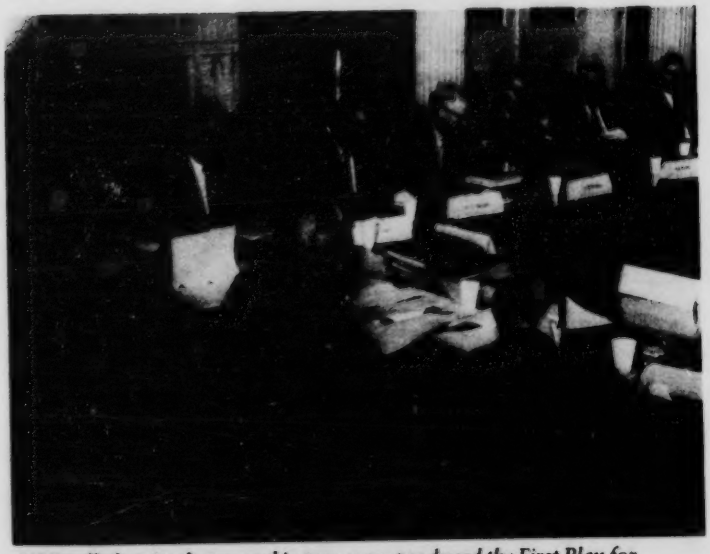
G.I. Smith, Minister of Finance when VEP was born.



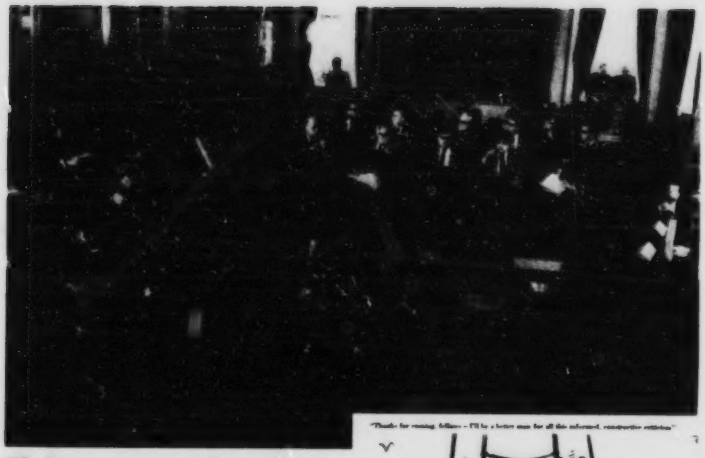
As each sector was created, it threw itself into the planning process. Chairman Russ Harrington discusses the manufacturing plan.



Making Steel in Sydney

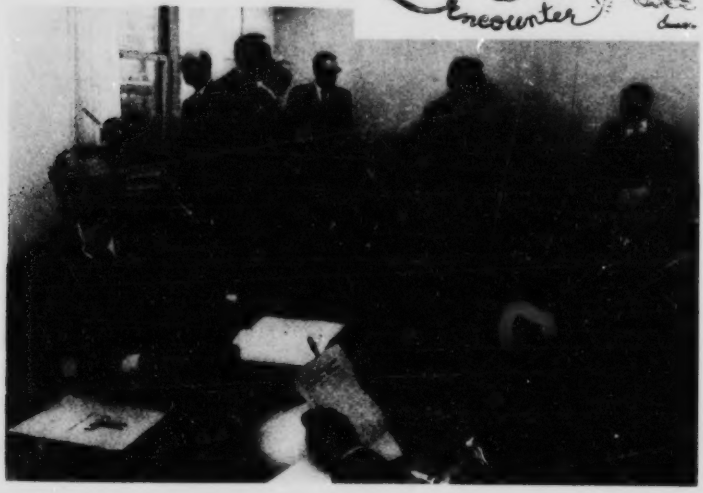


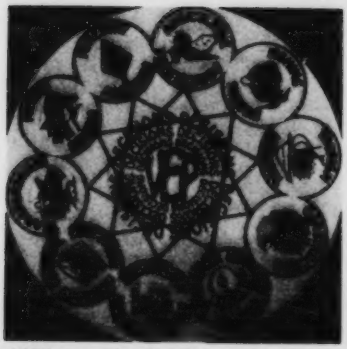
VEP rolled up its sleeves and in two years produced the First Plan for economic development in Nova Scotia.



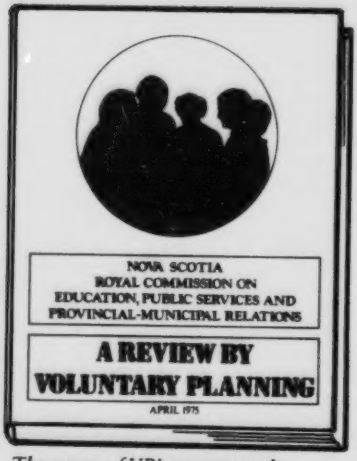
The Encounter team of consultants met with many representatives of government agencies.

Some of the "establishment" were less than happy with Encounter.





1970 was a landmark year for VP. The annual report cover that year illustrates the optimism and imagination of the time.



The cover of VP's report on the Graham Commission. Submissions to that Commission were stacked chest high.

Mr. Alan Shaw, Chairman of VP since 1981.

David Large receives certificate of recognition from Premier John Buchanan at 25 anniversary luncheon, as did other members of the Executive Committee—J.R. (Pat) Ellis, Hugh Fairn and Robert Cocks.

The Hon. Robert Stanfield addressing the 25th anniversary celebration of Voluntary Planning.

II

A Matter of Dialogue

"What is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"

—Lewis Carroll

1

Overview

Voluntary Planning customarily produces one voice out of the many voices of its volunteers.

Sector deliberations are based on opinion and point of view as well as research. Usually there is consensus—sometimes hard won. Part II reflects the quality of this debate and illustrates a variety of issues with which VP has been involved with varying outcomes. It is presented largely in the form of dialogue.

Interviews were conducted with a selected group of individuals who had a role to play in the events. Their spontaneous recollections were recorded and only lightly edited for style. **Their opinions do not necessarily reflect opinions held by the VP Board.** Topics discussed range from the easy passage of the Energy Sector's reports to the more complex difficulties of the Human Resources Sector and Spruce Budworm committees, but put together, they illustrate some of the dynamics of VP's planning process.

2

Spruce Budworm

Voluntary Planning attempts to solve problems and provides a forum to promote agreement and consensus on issues. When those issues involve high stakes with concomitant controversy, often strong positions are held and difficult decisions must be made.

In 1976 the problem of spruce budworm infestation in Cape Breton's woodlands challenged VP's capacity to find common ground within its organization. The tremendous pressure on the Spruce Budworm Committee, appointed by the VP Board to search out a solution, created polarized points of view. Pulp industry interests, faced with the destruction of the resource they needed to do business and maintain jobs, were vehemently in favor of spraying. Equally vehement were those who felt that spraying was a drastic and toxic intrusion into the fundamental ecology of the region that was neither safe nor predictable and perhaps not even necessary.

The first part of this section reflects the strongly held pro-spray views that emerged in the recommendations of the Spruce Budworm Committee. The people speaking were members of the original committee: Dr. David Large, Mr. John Dickey (Q.C.), and Mr. Robert (Bob) Cameron. The board supported these recommendations and forwarded them to government. When a number of issues related to spraying emerged and the government failed to implement the committee's recommendations, a new committee was struck—the Integrated Forest Management Committee—that attempted to look at the budworm problem and its solutions within a larger context of resource management.

The second part is an excerpt from the report of the Integrated Forest Management Committee, whose recommendations were supported by VP. This committee had the advan-

tage of observing the effects of the passage of time on the spruce budworm problem.

From the Spruce Budworm Committee

JD The issue came before VP, as I recall, first to the Forestry Sector. There had been an application for a spray program using fenitrothion, which was the spray that had been used in New Brunswick for a number of years. It was to spray an area of 2,000 acres in the centre of the Highlands of Cape Breton because of the serious infestation that was developing there.

That application was considered and approved and arrangements were made with aircraft, etc. And there had appeared in the *Sydney Post Record*, an article by Parker Barss–Dunham suggesting that doctors at the Children's Hospital in Halifax were researching the effects of the spray program in New Brunswick over the previous several years. And it was suspected (and there was some medically published literature) that there was a link between Reye's Syndrome and the use of fenitrothion in spraying.

As a result of that, a group went to see Dr. Crocker and took him to see the Minister of Health. Mr. Sullivan made an immediate decision that there would be no forest spraying in Nova Scotia. That was considered to be unacceptable by the forest industry generally. The matter was discussed in the Forestry Sector thoroughly and a report was made to the board.

The board was not prepared to accept the report of the sector without further study and a special committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Dr. David Large, whose terms of reference were to study all aspects of the question: the budworm infestation, methods of control if any, and the impact of those methods, and to make recommendations that could be forwarded on to government.

DL It was probably the most interesting committee I have chaired. There were some like myself who could not tell the difference between a housefly and spruce budworm. We knew a little about the budworm from the experiences in New Brunswick and what we heard on the news for years preceding 1976. There were also industry people with a real appreciation for what the budworm could do. We had people who were involved with the environmental

movement who had notions about the damage that the spray could do to the ecology and were against any kind of organo-phosphate spray.

We had input from the forest industry at the Strait of Canso, from the Atlantic Woodlot people, a major company, Nova Scotia Forest Industries, Canadian Wildlife, Department of Lands and Forests, Canadian Forestry Service.

JD The committee was very interested and represented the shades of opinion. My impression was that everyone on the committee had to deal openly with the issue.

DL We were looking at a crisis in the woods and tried to get a balanced view of just how bad things were.

RC It seems to me that after the third meeting I remember Dr. Crocker saying that his original document had been taken to government seven years before and it was being resurrected.

A couple of children in the same family, far away from any spraying, had come down with Reye's Syndrome in Newfoundland. He even gave us the gory details of how you zip the scalp off and put the top half of the skull in the freezer until the swelling had gone down in the brain.

Once the medical people diagnosed the disease, the losses which had been 80 percent or 90 percent dropped to being very minor. He felt that water based paints might be involved. That is, that it was not the fenitrothion—it was the vehicle for the chemical that was to blame.

JD Certainly the original experiments were with fenitrothion but Dr. Crocker and his associates came to believe that it was the emulsifier (that is, what the chemical was mixed with to make it into a spray) that was the culprit but further study has assigned very different causes to Reye's Syndrome.

Dr. Crocker did his research on one-day-old baby mice, and painted their bellies with the insecticide and then observed them for disease. It was not until he used the emulsifier that he produced the Reye's symptoms in the mice.

When he spoke to our committee, I think he felt that "spraying forests equals Reye's syndrome" was too sim-

plistic. As I recall the wisdom of the day, it required a susceptible individual, with a cholinesterose deficiency, an influenza A illness and possibly an inducing agent like the emulsifier he tested. He also named a rather long list of other inducing agents like Aspirin, and an ingredient found in ice cream.

RC It was a case of statistics. There were five deaths over five years, which was not too high. But, additionally there were annually 500 to 1000 deaths in the U.S. far from any spraying. In other words it was random, and it just happened to catch the news media in New Brunswick.

Do you remember that we were meeting every two weeks or so? After the second or third meeting we were down to a hard core of five or six.

DL I recall that those who were against the spray hung in longer than that. It was only at the end when the consensus of opinion was moving to spraying that they stayed away in protest.

RC The group that stuck it out to the end agreed that spraying was o.k.

DL Spraying with safeguards. . .not in watershed or populated areas, under Department of Health supervisors, and to preserve enough of the resource to allow the industry to survive. The threat to the forest was absolutely frightening in those years. Each fall the Canadian Forestry Service did what they called an "egg mass count"—reported on masses of eggs per so many square metres. A count of 240 egg masses would guarantee complete budworm defoliation of next year's new growth. The average counts in Cape Breton were well over 1,000 then, and in some cases over 1,500. This meant that with so many budworm larvae, not only was new foliage eaten, but "back-feeding" occurred, consuming the prior two-three years of growth. This is what killed the trees.

At the time we were getting information from the company that had leased lands that were being eaten and they said the woods were disappearing. Efforts at sylviculture by the company—spaced and thinned stands—were not working. They were being cleaned out. Every penny they were spending was being wasted. There were acres and

acres of brown forest. As time went on it became clear that the devastation was not as bad as that predicted by the companies but worse than the environmentalists had thought.

I presented the report of the subcommittee to the board who after much discussion felt that they could not support its recommendations.

RC The forests turned brown.

JD And then black. Losses were so severe that the Forestry Sector came back to the board more concerned than ever. It was then that the use of Bacillus thuringiensis (B.t.) was brought up and the Integrated Forest Management Committee was formed. The original report was written in 1976; this was now 1981. The basic premise, however, remained the same—to spray safely and economically. There had been experimental use of B.t. in Ontario and Quebec, and it was adopted here in Nova Scotia on an experimental basis.

RC It was agreed to have a mixture of board and sector, as they looked at this new position that perhaps everyone could live with. They met many times, that new committee, with helicopter trips as well. They had Dr. Smirnoff down from Quebec.

JD He gave a presentation to the Forestry Sector.

DL I had an opportunity to hear Dr. Smirnoff speak. He dramatized his confidence in the safety of B.t. by (he told us) drinking some from a bottle. He said it tasted fine.

The cost, however, was much greater for B.t. than fenitrothion.

RC It was a very weak tool and it was feared that because of its cost the program with B.t. would be inadequate in size and that's what did happen. With over 1.2 million acres absolutely seriously infested, their spraying program was only 95,000 acres.

JD On Cape Breton alone it's estimated that over 12 million cords were lost, which is more than the industry has consumed in 30 years.

Of course, finally the budworm ate all its food and went away again. It always exists and they will come back again if it's not controlled. The position taken "pro spray" (and I am biased in this because it was the position I took) has been vindicated. We said the anti-spray position would create the largest natural disaster in Nova Scotia and that has happened. We said the losses would exceed 10 million cords of merchantable soft wood and it's exceeded that. The anti-spray people said this would be an exaggeration—that there would be lots of wood left. That just was not right.

The main threat was believed to be to health. We said we would not support spraying if there was a hazard. We spent a lot of money over six months and satisfied ourselves that there was not a health hazard.

The anti-spray people said there was a threat to wildlife, butterflies and such; the Canadian Wildlife Service did not agree. Their research showed that while individuals might die, the race would survive, and thrive.

The result of the devastation on the Highlands of Cape Breton has been that the birds are gone; the small animals and insects are gone. Of course, the forests are coming back now and the wildlife with it, but it has been a slow process. My biased view is that we were fighting the good fight and nobody agreed with us.

Report of the Integrated Forest Management Committee

The Integrated Forest Management Committee, a portion of whose report follows, met with more success than its predecessor the Spruce Budworm Committee. Their recommendations received strong support from the VP Board and are reflected in government policy toward spruce budworm. This section is taken from a report of the Integrated Forest Management Committee.

Developments Since 1976

In the mid-seventies when the current spruce budworm epidemic began to peak, the people of the province, the government and the industry were relatively unprepared to deal with the budworm or current forest management techniques. In the interim a number of things have

happened:

a. The budworm infestation has spread to the mainland at moderate to severe levels, particularly in Cumberland County.

b. The protagonists of the seventies have softened in attitude, mostly because of B.t.'s acceptability, and a realization that spray is only one of the tools of integrated forest management.

c. Pulp mills are now successfully using salvaged wood, and more hardwood, due to acceptance of new technology.

d. The damage caused by the budworm since 1976, turned out to be less than the pro-spray advocates predicated, and on the other hand, more than foreseen by the anti-spray groups.

e. The General Development Agreement between the federal and provincial governments has had a positive effect on forestry management over the past five years. Better forest management and silviculture programmes have led to a general upgrading of the areas under management.

f. The Forest Improvement Act has been partially implemented and its provisions being carried out by the Forest Practices Improvement Board have contributed to a new positive forestry management attitude.

g. Bacillus Thuringiensis, B.t., is an effective control for budworm, and its use in Nova Scotia, is a major development. B.t.'s acceptance by anti-chemical spray groups is a significant change since 1976.

h. Greater acceptance by small woodlot owners, the government, and the industry, that these small holdings are an integral part of the province's wood fibre inventory....

Conclusions

The Forest Improvement Act was passed in 1965 and proclaimed in 1976. In June 1981, two of the eight proposed district boards were established and membership appointed.

The Province of Nova Scotia at the signing of the Subsidiary Agreement for Forestry of the General Development Agreement reiterated its intention to fully implement the

Forest Improvement Act. The General Development Agreement programme would, in cooperation with the province, fund the organizational aspect of private forest landowners, . . .and, on a shared basis, fund education through the printing of a manual of Good Forest Practice.

Through sections of the Act and proposed guidelines, the Forest Practices Improvement Board hopes to accomplish an improvement in the forest by creating forest stability through species management, increasing the annual growth increment, reduction of loss by natural causes, and the reduction of wasteful harvesting practices.

The committee concludes that immediate full implementation of the Forest Improvement Act is a factor in providing long term forest protection.

In order to ensure a continuance of native Nova Scotia species, and of sufficient quantities of seed and seedlings for planting, it becomes apparent that an intensive *protection programme for cone and seed production areas* is required. This intensive protection could include the use of chemical control substances.

The Committee judges bacillus thuringiensis, B.t., *to be an effective tool in control of the spruce budworm*. The Department of Lands and Forests is competent in the use of B.t., following generally accepted criteria for the application of the substances, which includes scientifically formulated planning on where to spray, how to spray and when to spray.

Orderly harvesting and distribution of wood fibre is crucial to the long term economic well-being of the forestry industry of Nova Scotia. In the past five years, through programmes provided by the Department of Lands and Forests General Development Agreement with the federal government, small woodlot owners are now managing their resources more efficiently. An appreciation of the forest as "crop" that can be nurtured and harvested is a welcome development.

This new level of sophistication by the small woodlot owner, coupled with increasing difficulty within the total forestry industry of balancing between, the pulp and sawlog sectors, hardwood and softwood and the relationship of supply area to user mill, points to an urgent need for

a province-wide wood distribution and marketing policy.

Recommendations

The Committee after careful consideration recommends:

1. Development, articulation and implementation of an overall forest policy for Nova Scotia.
2. Renewal of an expanded Canada/Nova Scotia Forestry Development Agreement.
3. Full implementation of the Forest Improvement Act with the set-up of all District Boards and full development of the guidelines for good forest practice.
4. An intensive protection programme for cone and seed production areas, plantations, and areas of young stands of twenty years or less average age where intensive thinning is being carried out. The primary protective spray would be B.t. with secondary use of chemical spray for radical intervention, if necessary.
5. Continuance of the aerial B.t. spray programme as currently conceived by the Department of Lands and Forests, related to the extent of spruce budworm infestation, wood fibre supply, and industry requirements.
6. A wood fibre allocation policy must be developed to ensure orderly and equitable distribution and marketing.

Comments

...Our research has been both enlightening and educating, and helped steer us to our unanimously reached conclusions and recommendations.

Good forest management is the result of cooperation between government, both provincial and federal, the forestry industry, and the people of Nova Scotia. This cooperation will bring about what we feel was the overriding objective of our committee

> To ensure the long term prosperity and viability of our forests for the economic and social good of Nova Scotia.

3

Land Resources Co-ordinating Council

The Land Resources Coordinating Council (LRCC) has grown in size and activity to represent half of VP's meetings. Finding an important area of legislation and public education needing attention, it has grown through its successes to involve scores of organizations representing many thousands of people who work on, live with, or otherwise enjoy the land.

Although many hard working volunteers regularly contribute to the good works of LRCC, four members of long standing within the organization gathered together to contribute their reminiscences to this book: Vera Stone, Lester Settle, Hugh Fairn and John MacGregor. It is indicative of the atmosphere of LRCC that while the purpose of this meeting was exclusively historical, the members spent more time conducting sector business for the future than reminiscing. Only the memories are recorded here.

VS It's been an interesting time.

LS Perhaps that's where we should begin...the fact that it started with 7 or 8 organizations and now there's 41.

HF LRCC started as a committee of the Voluntary Planning Board at first. Land Resources Coordinating Committee was our handle and as we grew...

LS Wasn't it called the council first?

VS We changed it as it grew.

HF As it grew it encompassed more and more interested groups and individuals and we recognized that we'd gone far beyond the committee concept and were now talking about taking on the shape of a council. We went back to the board and they were more than happy to see the

growth and wished us God's speed.

JM To go back one step in the history, the original concept came when the Christmas Tree Council was meeting with the Honourable George Henley who was then Minister of Lands and Forests. Mr. Henley advised he was agonizing over the setting of the hunting season dates to accommodate a variety of suggestions he received from individual landowner and landuser organizations. It was suggested that it would be a good first step to have these organizations meet together and try to arrive at a consensus date that would accommodate all interests and bring in their recommendations. I agreed to convene such a meeting which turned out to be the first meeting of the Land Resources Coordinating Committee.

HF We did grow like topsy; we thought it would be a committee level exercise—a short-term thing.

VS Like an *ad hoc* committee.

JM Yes, it started with the hunting season.

HF Yes, by golly, there was a real social issue in this that emerged and that was the public use of private land. In Nova Scotia where 75 percent of the forested land and more like 85 percent of the total land was in private hands, we really had a problem. The population of Nova Scotia is oriented towards outdoor recreation; we are great recreationists, as much as anywhere in North America, and our recreation areas have to be on private land, by the very nature of land tenure here.

This confrontation was emerging between those who were trying to manage and work and live on their lands, particularly the agricultural segment of our society, and the great pressure from all kinds of recreationists who were coming on that private land to have their recreation in the sun. And in many cases, they weren't particularly responsible in the way they treated private land.

Land was posted. No hunting, no fishing, no coming on here at all, usually with good reason.

LS And with no legal standing.

HF No legal standing, Lester. On the other side of the coin, the government had a responsibility in a social sense to provide some means by which the public could recreate. There had to be ground rules.

We thought we were involved with something quite straight forward but it turned out to be quite a can of worms.

LS The forestry people, particularly the large pulp companies, had as many if not more problems than we did in agriculture, because they were viewed as almost public. They had large holdings and people had the attitude that if this land belonged to Scott then it's really my land as a resident of the province and therefore I can do as I like.

They were experiencing a lot of vandalism, theft and nuisance activities that were even more than in agriculture.

JM They had files of these problems at the first meeting, I remember.

VS I think, though, that when it was clear that this *ad hoc* committee was able to meet its challenges and able to bring together all these factions that might not have otherwise got together, that's when it was decided that it should be a sector of Voluntary Planning.

JM I remember early on Lester Settle and the Federation of Agriculture thought that this would be a major issue and at the same time the Halifax Board of Trade were trying to develop a petty trespass act. So this problem of vandalism and trespass was coming to the fore.

LS One of the important things that needs to be said is that this committee and later the council always operated on the basis of consensus rather than majority vote—even when we grew to 41 organizations.

If one member had serious reservations we tended to stall on taking action. And that's quite a unique thing for a group that size.

We did reach consensus on what we thought was right for the hunting season. That was probably the first recommendation we made to the Minister, Mr. Henley, at that time. And the Trespass Act has been an on-going long-term process. We've had many subcommittee meetings about it.

JM And difficult meetings. Trying to get this consensus.

HF But that was the strength, wasn't it? The fact that we could get together with different views—sometimes dramatically opposed views at first—and work it through the subcommittee process. Having a go at writing some

legislation and coming back with agreement.

What probably gave me the most satisfaction of all was to see us come up with that final draft of the Act to Protect Property, commonly known as the Trespass Act. That was a major piece of legislation. It had never been successfully attempted or completed in the history of the province before.

JM What was unique about that was that we wrote our own Act in our own way. Usually you are looking at a government Act and trying to revise it. When the government heard we were working on legislation, when they got wind of it about a year after we had completed ours, Bill MacDonald of the Legislative Council came to us and said "John, what's the chances of taking our draft for legislation of the Trespass Act out to your group to see how it's going to fit?"

LS If he had proceeded with his draft it would never have been satisfactory to our groups.

JM And it wasn't quite satisfactory even in the end. I remember our chairman, Hugh Fairn, was always concerned with seeing the final government draft before it went to legislature. We asked to see it for one whole year and couldn't. When it went to first reading in the legislature, certain elements in our group couldn't accept it the way it was written at that time. There was such a great concern, after they had this problem with the first reading, that the Minister called in at Voluntary Planning and said "MacGregor, can you get together the group in LRCC who put your act together? We have real problems with this and we want to see what they think about it."

Almost instantly, within a day or two, we got this meeting together with the Attorney General, Harry Howe, landowners and landusers, and we quickly found out where the difficulties were between our draft and their last draft. When they accepted our original, you might say, they had no problems.

HF It went flying through the House.

VS I think that's one reason why there is such a steady membership within LRCC. I think that's why the government has come so often to the council to ask for help, I think it's as a result of that Trespass Act.

HF It's part of the maturation process of Voluntary Planning as well, Vera. Voluntary Planning has been accepted over a long period of time, and it took a long time, to show itself a responsible, mature organization that'll treat things with confidentiality—not a biased opinion but a well thought out one. Government is turning more and more to Voluntary Planning and not just in LRCC. Just today in our executive meeting we considered two requests from government for advice, which is a healthy trend.

Government sees that we can give good advice. It's popular and it's sensible.

LS It's interesting that the one part of that bill that we didn't support was enforcement. We recommended that it be enforced not just by RCMP and municipal police officers but also by employees of Lands and Forests. That's the part they didn't put in and that's been the biggest weakness.

There's a case where they didn't follow our advice and it's continued to create problems.

VS That too could be because liability hasn't been established.

LS Well, it may have had something to do with that, but I think they were just reluctant...

HF To give Lands and Forests extra duties.

But we gave the government a proposition that if they would pass this act, we would undertake an education program to acquaint Nova Scotians with the meaning and intent of the Act. And we have.

JM Mr. Henley, the Minister, said he'd gone almost a year without any complaints and prior to LRCC getting involved in this land use concern it was one of the major concerns of the department.

We still have a small budget from Lands and Forests.

VS Don't we consider *Share the Land Week* part of this education?

JM That's the highlight—the long-term part of it.

HF People might say why do you need money, when everything is done on a voluntary basis—you have expert people on your committee who give their time and talents for nothing. Why do you need money?

We've had to produce and publish a lot of educational materials. We've gotten them even then at a third of their cost on the market. A great deal of our artistic and development work has been volunteered.

JM We've had great support from the Department of Education who have put our material into the schools. Once we send our brochures and materials to the printer it's pretty well up to other organizations to promote them on our behalf.

HF They do come to us for material. For example, Lands and Forests have taken thousands of our *Ask Permission First* brochures, which is the one supporting the Act to Protect Property.

JM The RCMP came to us and paid for their own.

LS Our Grade 4 elementary kit is *My Land, Your Land, Our Land*. Our cost to produce that was about $4,000. There's probably no other text in the school system of Nova Scotia that is as well done for such a small cost.

JM We paid about $1,500 for a nine-minute video called *Off the Road* about all-terrain vehicle use.

VS We had the Grade 9 students do that.

JM That was in support of legislation which is now called the Off Highways Vehicle Act which we've been working on for a long time. This has been very popular with landowners. They encouraged us to get into this. On the market the video would have cost $9,000. In fact when the government wanted to publicize the Act the best footage they could find for television was in our video. That would have cost the government a great deal more.

LRCC has never gone out looking for members. They've always come to us.

HF Sometimes we would be involved in discussions at the Council level with all members there—and out of one particular concern would come a whole new or parallel concern or approach. To deal with it expeditiously, we would have to form a subcommittee.

At one point we had 14 subcommittees, working on their own concerns, forwarding recommendations to the Council to be sent on to the board or to go on to government.

People were attracted to the organization. Sometimes if we lacked expertise on a particular subject amongst the 30 or 40 people around the council chamber, that's when John would reach out on our behalf to some individual

private citizen or government person to sit on a committee and work with us.

Once they worked with us, we never lost them. They stuck with us and brought their organization with them.

JM We really did have the highest officials among the 40 organizations.

I had a call from the secretary of the Houndsmen's Association. I thought perhaps they had only come because of a particular issue that they were interested in.

I spoke to them today and they said we'll make sure someone is always there. Sometimes it's hard to get people there because we meet so often.

VS I'd like to tell how the Girl Guides became a part of LRCC.

I knew nothing about LRCC when I was at a Canoe Nova Scotia meeting. Rick Gilbert was speaking about something to do with land. As you know the Girl Guides own quite a bit of land so I perked up my ears. When I asked him what he was talking about, he said that the Boy Scouts represented us.

To say the least, I hit the roof.

HF That wasn't a very diplomatic thing for Rick to say.

VS At the time I was Provincial Commissioner. I said to him, no, they don't represent us and if the Boy Scouts sit on this council so should the Girl Guides.

I took it up with my council and I began attending [LRCC], representing the Girl Guides.

HF One of the best things that happened to LRCC.

VS It's been a great learning experience for me. I consider the people I've met as my friends as well as people to work with.

Through my connection with LRCC I've been involved in Litter Abatement and now as Chairman of the Clean Nova Scotia Foundation.

HF Which was an outgrowth of LRCC's Litter Abatement subcommittee.

VS People have to learn that things take time to evolve. The Clean Nova Scotia Foundation is a good example.

We've waited a while to get approval for it through the Voluntary Planning Board. This is a good thing to realize that the board censors what goes on in the sectors.

We approached them. They sent the ideas back to be revised. We went back in about six months and at that time they agreed that the government would be approached.

The government has supported it strongly. They are backing our administrative costs for a two and a half year period.

We hope then to be self-sufficient.

LS Hope to be clean.

VS We hope to have made some progress in being clean. It's going to take time.

I also sit on another subcommittee which Lester Settle does too. That evolved from the Dalhousie School of Resource and Environmental studies.

HF They came to LRCC to ask us to endorse the World Wildlife and Conservation Program, the Canadian equivalent thereof; they thought that we should have one in Nova Scotia. That committee worked with the Resource Development group at Dalhousie, went to the Nova Scotia Government and said, "We need some information. We need an inventory of all legislation in Nova Scotia that impacts on the environment." That work was done by the Deputy Ministers Land Use Committee. A very useful report for that committee. I believe it has gone on to other important things as the board's committee on Environment and the Economy. I think there will be great things ahead for that committee.

VS LRCC's work continues as well. We have done four sector studies last year. We got a grant from the federal government to do research work.

LS This is taking a preliminary look at the conservation possibilities for Nova Scotia.

JM For example, the agricultural study that we did last year, Lester Settle took it to the Agriculture Sector and they washed it even cleaner, got the practical industry thoughts in it. As well, the Department of Agriculture [and Marketing] were interested in the subject and they made it even more widely acceptable.

VS Again that committee had to learn that we couldn't just rush through things. Some of the people on that committee didn't realize the necessity because of the way that Voluntary Planning works.

LS And the sensitivities that there are.

VS That's exactly right.

JM We have to go slow or we'd lose our balanced opinion.

HF One of the interesting things about that committee is their name. It isn't just the Environment Committee, it's Environment and the Economy. The two are inseparably bound in any environment particularly here in Nova Scotia, because of our small size and private land ownership and so on.

This thrust for Nova Scotia will be an economic thrust as much as anything else and this is why the Voluntary Planning Board is taking such an interest in this particular issue. The two are inseparable and I'm so pleased that it's gone as far as it has.

JM What that committee is doing is producing a conservation strategy for the province of Nova Scotia which can fit into the other work of the Voluntary Planning Board Committees.

VS It is interesting that LRCC approached the board and they were able to see that it needed to go into a wider scope.

JM The first spin-off group LRCC was involved with was the Hunting and Fishing Guides.

In our discussions with the Minister of Lands and Forests, we recognized the need to bring together in discussions the two groups then representing the guides.

He tried to do this at a public meeting down in Bridgewater. It blew right up in his face. He had the eastern and western groups together and he just didn't know where to take it from there. There was a great split in the guiding industry in Nova Scotia.

HF While this split was occurring, the government was at an impasse in their efforts to regulate the professional guides and to advise the potential customers and sportsmen coming in from outside, everyone was losing money. The outfitters were losing money and so were the guides. The province was losing money. We were turning away I don't know how many hundreds of visitors who would have liked to have come here to enjoy our hunting and fishing.

LRCC made it possible for those groups to come together and with total cooperation speak with one voice for all the professional guides.

LS Then we tackled the problem of qualifications, because the

Department of Tourism and Department of Lands and Forests said look, now that we have one organization we have no qualifications. We don't know whether we can list this guy as a guide or someone whose interested in going out on the weekend to walk in the woods. No credentials. So we worked with Lands & Forests and the Department of Education and came up with three classes of guides and a course testing and ranking system. It's in the nature of Voluntary Planning that it cannot sustain a particular organization indefinitely. We get in on the innovative part, on the setting up, but when a group matures they have to find a permanent base outside of Voluntary Planning.

We assist in both the care and feeding of the infant, but we turn it loose to run on its own in the world.

It's happened so many times: the Arson Prevention Foundation, Clean Nova Scotia, Christmas Tree Council, Economic Development Association of Nova Scotia.

LS The LRCC subcommittees reflect real concerns from the grass roots. It was someone who came to us from the woodlot owners about the need for arson prevention; it was somebody coming to us about hazardous waste disposal that precipitated the creation of another committee. The concerns have not come down from above, but up from the bottom. It makes it more legitimate and makes for more commitment on the part of our members who serve on those committees.

HF Credibility with your membership is important. When these issues come up from the grass roots you can imagine the credibility it would have with ministers. If he or his officials originate an idea and throw it out on the water to test the wind it doesn't have the same credibility.

It's the epitome of the Voluntary Planning modus operandi.

We start it out at the bottom, work it up through the system, percolate it through, massage it, fine tune it and put it out to government or to the public.

JM I think of the Trails Act. We wouldn't let it go through because it wasn't balanced in our view with regard to landowner/landuser. A lot of people in our organization were upset with the recreationalists. This was an Act that should have been proclaimed and in force.

HF Why were we dragging our feet?

JM A very good reason and only one. We could not get the support of the landowners of Nova Scotia without a good liability clause, an occupier's liability clause that would protect them against claims from those operators on the lands for some accident that might happen to them.

Voluntary Planning was involved with the abandoned rail lines issue too.

That issue originally came from the President of the Nova Scotia Woodlot Owners and Operators Association. He had a great interest in that. He wanted the use of some of the abandoned rail lines for forestry operations.

HF We just got into that when we found that the Annapolis Valley Affiliated Boards of Trade were deeply into the matter of one particular line between Middleton and Bridgewater. They wanted to use this for recreation. That was the first one they became involved in.

And then we found there were other rail lines in the province where there were real conflicts between adjacent landowners and recreationists: the old problem of land tenure and land use. It became a natural problem for LRCC so we set up a subcommittee. Diane LeGard brought her experience and expertise from the AVABT [Annapolis Valley Associated Boards of Trade] and a couple of members from that organization. That committee produced an interesting study of the present and proposed uses of abandoned rail lines and determined in the end that the Province of Nova Scotia should take the lead and pick up this land whenever the transportation companies abandoned the rail lines. They should be bought at a fair price and held for the best and highest use, not necessarily recreation, or forestry or any single use in particular.

JM Which might even be the landowner himself.

HF Yes, absolutely. The committee has tried to find a compromise use or a multiple use for these lands because as you know rail lines are built up high, well drained and usually cross water courses with very well constructed bridges. They are usually well maintained and good for a number of years. They are an asset as recreational land, access to farmlands, woodlots, and pleasant places to hike.

JM That is one of the best balanced committees in LRCC in my opinion. Landowners, landusers...we've even had Dr.

Sheehy whose riding is in that area; we've had councillors and county wardens come to meetings. There is so much interest, but like most issues in Voluntary Planning you have to have patience. I can remember land use planning in agriculture. A few years ago there wasn't a farmer who would have anything to do with it. We often have to go through several meetings before a broader view than self-interest can develop. Now we really have a solid consensus in LRCC.

HF To a certain extent the abandoned rail lines have been a hot potato. The government have been hot and cold on the subject for years.

The rail lines don't want to sell small pieces, they want to sell all of them or at least large parts to one party and the obvious choice is government. Meanwhile they are getting eroded.

VS What about this new committee?

JM The Land Use Management Committee?

LS There's another instance where an issue emerges from the grass roots. Some person laid a concern on the table—were large companies becoming too large as landowners? Should there be a restriction on the amount of land a large company like Scott can hold? It grew out of that concern, to include agricultural land as well. It's another way it grows from the grass roots.

HF This happens in Voluntary Planning. The issue will be talked out.

JM It takes time.

HF You'll take it to what you believe is the limit and turn it off, but in five, six, eight years it'll return again and usually the original solution to the problem is still valid. That's the process.

I suppose there is no question that LRCC has been the most active sector, the largest membership....

At first, when I was chairman there were 7 member organizations: now there are 41. We extrapolated that number to estimate the membership representation as 70,000 Nova Scotians in contact through LRCC. I'm not the least bit unhappy with our performance. People have felt a great sense of accomplishment in being able to see their concerns being addressed by someone. And the edu-

cation, just being there and being able to see the other person's point of view is a fantastic educational experience.

VS I think we've been very fortunate in that our chairman has always pointed out places where we could do more research and so when we've gone to the board our recommendations have always been well prepared.

LS One area where we had our wings clipped a little was in fund raising. We got into a lot of fund raising to finance our activities and the board had to tell us to concentrate more on policy issues.

VS I think that was a fair criticism.

HF We had to learn that.

JM We still need a small budget to produce our brochures.

HF There was a time in the history of the organization when certain members of the Voluntary Planning Board were concerned that the tail was wagging the dog a bit and that LRCC was so active that it was eclipsing not only the activities of the board but other sectors.

That was a dangerous impression for us to leave with them. We had to reassess our role, not necessarily to cut back but just to find out where we were most effective. There may have been just a touch of professional jealousy there.

LS Maybe the dog was asleep and didn't want the tail to wag.

HF At every meeting of the board we would make reports about LRCC's latest accomplishments and recommendations and the members were in general greatly impressed and said so. I got many nice compliments. But meeting after meeting, the members began to think that maybe the tail was wagging the dog even if the dog was asleep.

LS I have to say this though, that sometimes the board becomes isolated from the activities of the sector. When we needed funds for our projects, the board, if it had been alert, would have raised the funds for us.

HF When you think of the things that Voluntary Planning has done at such a small cost, such value for the small amount of money.

VS I think the time given by people is important, that's the real value.

HF By and large the governments of Nova Scotia have had a real bargain in Voluntary Planning.

4

Energy 1990

In late 1978, the Energy Sector under the chairmanship of Dr. George Holbrook published a report *Energy Outlook – 1990* which attempted to provoke discussion on the energy options for the future of the province. This was followed in 1979 by an *Energy Plan for Nova Scotia* published by the Department of Mines and Energy. In 1983, the Energy Sector updated their report to 1995 under the chairmanship of Professor Walter Kontak.

Gary Croswell was a sector coordinator on the staff of VP for a number of years; William Shaw was Deputy Minister of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources for a time during the events discussed in this meeting.

GC The beginning of the Energy Report was actually with the sectors back in 1974. The manufacturing sector was worked up about their electrical demand charges and the tourism sector was worried about oil and gas prices.

WS They were worried about gasoline shortages and whether the Americans would drive up to Nova Scotia.

GC That's right and they were worried in the tourist resorts that were closed for the summer, that they had to pay demand charges all year round. We had manufacturing sector meetings around the province and we invited other sectors like agriculture to sit in on them.

The end result was a report to the board called "Power Costs" and on the strength of that report, the Nova Scotia Power Corporation reduced the demand costs for manufacturers and they changed billing to a seasonal basis for tourist areas that were closed down in the winter.

Then because of this interest the board asked the energy sector to prepare the first report—*Energy 1990*.

The energy sector was originally the Power Sector. The

coordinator for it was Peter Wilson from TUNS under contract. I don't think the Power Sector had put out a report before that.

GH No, it was the first one.

WS The real crunch had come in 1979.

That was when everyone got excited because it was the second whammy in the price increases. There was one in 1973 which tripled the price of a barrel of oil to about $8. 1979 was the next big impulse which shot it up to $18 or $20 and of course it went up from there. People were really worried in the 1979 period. Thats why I think there was a big push for people to get this report out in the 79–80 period.

GH I came back from Ottawa in 1975 and started back in Voluntary Planning. I think I inherited the Energy Sector in 1978.

GC No thought was given to a report before you arrived.

GH That's right. Nothing had been done so we decided we would do a report, mind you based upon the Arab influence from 1973–74.

One of the interesting things was this Delphi investigation we did of the price of oil. There were no firm statistics on where the price was going.... So we sent out a form to every member of the board, about 30 odd people, saying Would you give us your best guess about the price over these years? We averaged them together and came up with a curve that was pretty close to what actually happened.

Partially based on that we wrote our Energy 1990 report. And I think the second feature of this report worth commenting on was the difficulty—not just difficulty we ran into a brick wall—trying to get the price of coal out of Devco. They wouldn't talk to us or give us anything.

And so in this publication [*Energy 1990*] on page 20 you'll see under cost of coal there's a blank and we deliberately sent it into the government like that saying why we did.

GC The important thing here is that I think it was the first time in the history of Voluntary Planning that each person contributed to a report. George decided this. We sat down in his house and assigned everyone a section to write. And they had to send us in what they thought. Then we rewrote it in one style. We assigned such things as wind power,

nuclear and such. Ewart Blanchard was interested in nuclear power.

GH To sum up what we said, seeing where the cost of oil was going, Nova Scotia for the interim period ought to increase its consumption of coal. It was the only way to go. We also had recommendations in there to say that they ought to look at other things. We knew little about wood.

GC Or nuclear for that matter or wind or tidal. But for the next four or five years coal would be the only thing to keep us from breaking the bank and I think that was right at that point.

WS And still is.

Roy MacLean tried to get that information and he couldn't, but negotiations were continuing between the provincial and federal governments on the price of coal and it was a shaky government-to-government discussion because no one else had much to say about it. The price of coal was not entirely economics.

GC While this was being done, energy wasn't the popular item it is today. There weren't various consultants making predictions about energy costs. The Manhattan Bank didn't have its monthly piece on energy. It was quite new on the scene. It wasn't received with open-arms by government. That's for sure. We met with the Premier, Mr. Buchanan.

WS 1978? It had to be October or November.

GC We met in January actually. The point was that he didn't like some of the things we had to say about the price of coal. They couldn't believe that we couldn't find the cost, but the main thing was that the Department of Mines had not up to that time had an energy plan. They were doing some statistics but that's as far as they went. Because so many members of the government didn't like this report it made me think that perhaps this is what started them in planning.

WS Could be.

GC A year after our report they came up with their own. It took us about two years to do ours.

WS Their own report? Which one was that?

GH Report of the Energy Council.

WS The preliminary report was in October 1, 1979 and the

final written version was a little later.

GC That's what I said—about a year after ours.

WS I don't think it happened quite the way you picture it.

GC That's the way it seemed to us.

WS It wasn't the Department of Mines realizing they had to do something.

I remember very well how it all happened because I got so deeply involved for about 15 months. I was down in Maine for a visit, and I was coming back on the ferry. I remember so well.

The Premier called me on the ferry with a sense of urgency. So I got off and called him back. He said, "Bill, we need an energy plan" and he asked me if I would do it. And, of course, I did. So it wasn't the Department of Mines.

Really, it was the Premier realizing and perhaps stimulated by your report, that we didn't have an analysis of the energy situation in Nova Scotia. We didn't have the government policy for the long term and we'd better get it pretty fast. That was July 1979. The Voluntary Planning Document was very useful because I was well acquainted with it.

GH I don't think the figures were that useful. It did serve as a piece of paper to get the fire going, though.

WS That's right. We did all the analyses and comparisons from the smallest operation up to the nuclear. The economic analyses showed that coal was the best bet, which we had anticipated.

GH This report was released directly to the media. I was quite shocked when I presented the thing at a board meeting and Russ Harrington said right off the bat, that we'll give it to the media. It was written as a working document for the board.

WS It was widely circulated.

GH I had to go on television and radio and talk about the thing. It was hard to present this to the press. It wasn't slick enough.

GC The report was mailed out to the sectors.

WS It went the usual route.

GH It was circulated to the board members three weeks before the meeting....It was a first in Voluntary Planning that the chairman should say without any reference to the government. "It's going to the media." I imagine, though, that he spoke to the Premier first.

Let's talk about the second report. The government had come out with their report. The sector felt that it was time that we looked at all the changes with the formation of OPEC, and OPEC not controlling the prices like they'd hoped to. And the price of oil came cascading down.

GC The reasons for using alternate energy sources were disappearing in many ways. It was felt that it was time for an update. You were chairman at the time, Walter. You decided to do what George had done. Each person took a section of the report and wrote it. You and I and George sat down and put the thing together.

This report was received differently in many ways from the first report.

GH It wasn't made public.

GC Bill, you had left the job of Deputy Minister when this came out. This was November '83. We sent a draft copy to the new Deputy Minister and, to be honest, he didn't like some of the remarks we made about coal and he asked us to change our report. This was the first time anyone had asked us to change a report and we refused.

WS What didn't he like about it?

GC He didn't like us saying that we were still unable to find the cost of coal and something we said about subsidies. He wanted some of these things changed. We refused and gave it to the board as it was. It didn't really cause any trouble.

Two years after this the Department of Mines and Energy came out with their own report, in 1985. This time we agreed with their work much better than we had in the past. We felt that what came out of Mines and Energy was very much in agreement with this report. We came to the point where we started working together.

What we're doing in the Energy Sector now is updating this Energy 1995 Report to the year 2000, but because our predictions were so close there will only be a small bit to change in the summary.

WS But looking at the fundamentals, were there any real differences in the Energy Sector?

GC No, no.

GH Coal was it.

GC All things being equal.

WS Coal was the way to go when we looked at the overall employment situation as well as the net economic situation for the province and its people. We couldn't conceive losing 4,000 jobs in a province that was on its rear end for the most part.

GC Our sector's only difference with the government overall, and here I'm not speaking about Mines and Energy specifically, was their refusal to look at nuclear at all.

WS Oh, they did look at nuclear.

GC The second time around I mean. The second plan...

WS Wouldn't look at it all?

GC The Nova Scotia Energy Plan—there was no mention at all in it.

WS There was very little in the first plan about nuclear but it was looked at carefully. You've got to remember that in those days nuclear was very sensitive. Environmentalists were pressing us all the way around. There was a very careful analysis done on the cost benefits of nuclear. Coal was so far ahead when you examined the total economic picture that there never really was any question.

WK There have always been strong supporters of coal...people who said let's look at nuclear and others who talked wind and tidal. The thing we did, and I believe it's part of the report to 1990 and the second to 1995, was say let's keep all our options before us and keep before all those making decisions the idea of energy mix. I think we had in mind that we wouldn't be say 90 percent dependent on coal and during a coal strike be helpless. This is part of what we had in mind. We wanted a balance and avoid all the pressures there were to go in just one direction.

WS But the options weren't closed; in fact, they were maintained.

WK Well, that was our point.

WS In fact, in November 1979 we signed the tidal power

agreement which resulted in the building of Annapolis so that when and if tidal power became feasible economically we could introduce it. This was a major move towards diversification. The programs we had in wind and wood power were all kicked off in 1979–80. You might keep in mind that we did do them. The federal government was heavily involved at the time and put many of their own programs in place and we were able to pick and choose. At the same time they were subsidizing coal which was essential.

GC The Energy Sector has never had changes made to its work by the board. Some other sectors like forestry, tourism have had problems getting their reports through the board. The board has never been a rubber stamp but the Energy Sector reports have always been accepted. There was controversy with budworm, uranium mining, nuclear energy but never the energy sector.

WK I'll say something on that. I was at a transportation sector meeting when Russ Freeman asked me to join the Energy Sector. I said, "Look I'm neither a scientist nor an engineer." He said, "Really what we're looking for is a layman to bring a different point of view on issues" and it's in that capacity that I sat. I've been involved in several sectors—transportation and energy sectors, human resources and the board for a few years.

Without gilding the lily, it's fair to say that in my experience the concentration of expertise and agreement on where we are going would be difficult to duplicate in any other sector. The qualifications of the people are obvious and what we're aiming at is obvious.

Mind you, there's never been complete agreement around the table. We're being kind today in things that we're saying. But the disagreements have been technical rather than ideological. Therefore I think some of the ideological handles you could grab onto with other issues in forestry or whatever have been missing.

That's why, as Gary says, the reports have gone forward.

GC Look at the On-Site that Voluntary Planning has just gone through. We've had our terms of reference for two years already that we did ourselves and we had a plan in place.

The On-Site recommendations were a piece of cake because we already had them done. Because of our planning we always knew where we were going and the board always accepted our reports.

GH I think in talking about the Energy Sector we should pay tribute to Dan Brown who was given tremendous support...

He was Vice President of the Power Commission. Although he was a Power Corporation man he gave a most balanced view to the deliberations of the sector—provided a wealth of information, always did his homework. He was one of the great supporters of the Energy Sector.

GC He's still a member.

WK Dan Brown was our window on coal and brought a very balanced perspective.

In our discussions we also gave general thought to whether we should be sending fossil fuels up our chimneys and out our exhausts. Perhaps they should be kept for higher purposes like feedstocks for technological development.

WS Feedstocks for liquid fuels, perhaps, and petro chemicals which will be coming. We're not quite there now.

WK You always have the question of economics before you. It's important to keep these ideas forward and hope that they will be feasible some day. At least you have them for posterity so that a century from now they will know that it was a small group without influence or power who had vision.

(Laughter and clapping)

And you can quote me on that.

5

The Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education

The Human Resources Sector is an outgrowth of the Educational Council of the board originally chaired by Jim Mitchell. In 1982 Sheila Urqhart, who was the Coordinator of the Educational Council prepared a Proposal for the Organization of a Human Resources Sector. This proposal broadened the terms of reference of the old Educational Council, which it replaced, to include not only educational and training matters but also the availability of manpower to meet the developmental needs of the province. It was originally chaired by George Holbrook and since its inception has had three succeeding chairmen: Bill Windler, Peter O'Brien and, currently, Terry Clayton. It has sent a variety of reports and submissions to the board on such matters as apprenticeship training, community colleges, and a major submission to the Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education.

On extremely rare occasions there is no mutually satisfactory outcome to dealings between sectors and the board of Voluntary Planning. This account of the Human Resources Sector's submission to the Royal Commission on post-secondary education and its difficult and finally unsatisfactory passage toward board approval reflects only the sector's point of view, and should be considered as such.

Shortly after the formation of the Human Resources Sector, the Government of Nova Scotia announced the establishment of a Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education. This commission was to examine a wide aspect of post-secondary matters including the financing of this endeavour and the research done by universities as a by-product of their primary educational role. It provided a unique opportunity

for VP to make a statement that would be released directly to the public, as all submissions to the commission were to be made at public hearings.

George Holbrook, who was chairman of the Human Resources Sector at that time, comments

> The announcement of the formation of the commission and its request for submissions provided a challenge and an opportunity for Voluntary Planning to examine, in depth, the post-secondary situation in Nova Scotia. At an early meeting of the sector it was agreed that a submission would be prepared and I so informed the board at its next meeting. The board was in agreement with this proposal and we set up a number of teams within the sector to prepare various facets of the submission. A small editorial group consisting of myself, Susan Jackson and Bob Candy was established to integrate the work of the sector and to establish a consistent style of presentation. Bill Windler undertook the significant task of preparing a statement on research which was included as an adjunct to the main submission. From the outset we had some difficulty in obtaining relevant statistics as many of the educational establishments and, indeed, some government departments were loath to give us figures on enrollments, failure rates and finances. It was significant that the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Committee declined to give us the information we required although some of the universities, in particular Dalhousie, were extremely cooperative. In the end, through the help of Statistics Canada and the statistician of the commission, we were able to obtain all of the information we required. I was able to meet with the chairman of the commission to ascertain the type of submission and the form which would be of most value to his group.
>
> A substantial and reasonably detailed submission of over sixty pages was produced which covered such subjects as: Student Qualifications, Continuing Education, Cooperative Education, Finances, Institutional Organization and Research and Technology Transfer. Over 20 relevant appendices containing the essential statistics and the sources of these statistics were included and the complete submission was circulated, some two weeks prior to a board meeting, to all board members.
>
> The discussion of our submission was made the sole topic of this board meeting and I had ample opportunity

to present our findings, to enlarge on certain topics and to answer questions of the board members. I moved the adoption of the submission, and the motion was carried with the rider that some small amendments were to be made by myself and Pat Ellis. This we did on the spot and the final copy was set up for duplication and distribution to the commission. In common with all other submissions, copies were made available to the media and the public and we were asked to make a formal presentation to the commission at a public hearing. I attended this hearing accompanied by Bill Windler, who was by then chairman of the sector, and Ruth Goldbloom and Pat Ellis. After Bill had given the commission a brief description of the makeup and work of the Voluntary Planning Board, I was asked to present, verbally, our findings. Following this presentation the commission then asked a series of shrewd questions, which I and my colleagues answered, and after over three hours on the stand our presentation was complete.

The hope had been expressed to us by the commission that we would produce some "startling" suggestions for their consideration. I suppose the most startling of our proposals was that the post-secondary system should be student rather than institution driven. To this point we urged that, while no student should be denied the opportunity of undertaking post-secondary education because of finances, funding should be directed to the student by means of scholarships, bursaries and loans. The only funding that would be granted to institutions would be for infrastructure and the operating costs of institutions should be provided from student fees. We felt that this would not only make the student aware of the true costs of his/her education but would also ensure that institutions would be forced to operate in a business like fashion. It would give the province a much greater control over expenditures and programs and would eliminate the current system in which every student is given a significant bursary regardless of need.

This proposal was, indeed, not unique as it had already been mooted by the Graham Royal Commission some years previously.

After an hiatus of about 12 months the report of the commission was published and distributed. While many of the features of the VP submission had been reflected in the report,

the Human Resources Sector was not satisfied with the manner in which finances had been dealt with. Consequently, a commentary on the report was prepared which, among other things, rejected the commission's theme that an across-the-board increase of fees of 100 percent was a solution to the problem. The commentary was also critical of the proposed Higher Education Council and the lack of emphasis on cooperative education. This commentary was circulated to the board and presented for approval and onward transmission to government at the next board meeting.

Ray Carman, a member of the sector and a member of the board at that time, recalls:

> It was unfortunate that our presentation was the last item on the agenda of that meeting and, clearly, members were anxious to get at their lunches. Bill Windler made a brief presentation of the material and moved its adoption and this motion was duly seconded. An amendment was proposed by one board member which would have eliminated the financial section of the commentary—this in spite of the fact that the board had already approved the principle outlined in the original submission to the commission.
>
> The amendment was not seconded and the original motion was put to the vote and was carried by six votes to five with the majority of the board abstaining. The chairman, Allan Shaw, clearly thought this was not sufficiently conclusive and ruled that the motion would be tabled for a further meeting. As Bill Windler was out of town during the following weeks, George Holbrook and Susan Jackson, who was vice chairman of the sector, consulted Allan Shaw as to the next move and he suggested that the financial section be reviewed and presented once more. The sector was resolutely in favour of its original thesis and, while a good deal of additional material was generated in support of the financial section, the substance was not changed and this was again circulated to the board and presented at the next board meeting. Clearly a good deal of lobbying had taken place during the interim and while the main body of the critique was forwarded to government, the financial section was once more returned to the sector for revision.
>
> At the next sector meeting it was clear that members were incensed with this approach and authorized the chairman to offer the board three alternatives which were:

- adopt the original financial section
- rewrite the financial section by some other committee
- tell the government that the board was unable to come to any conclusion about finances.

The third option was adopted and the government so informed.

I think that this operation was unique in the history of Voluntary Planning in that a sector was adamant to the end on its views and that the board had to admit to government, after agreeing to the original submission, that it could not find a consensus on an important facet of the investigation.

The board and the sector can take some encouragement, in spite of the difficulty of arriving at a final resolution of the financial question of post-secondary education, in that many of the other suggestions offered in the original submission have now borne fruit. Among these are:

- the appointment of a scientific advisor to the government
- the establishment of a Science and Technology Council
- the establishment of a Task Force on Cooperative Education
- the establishment of community colleges
- the establishment of a new department of Higher Education Training.

It is also encouraging that the Human Resources Sector continues its work with unabated enthusiasm.

The current work of the sector includes:

- a continuing examination of apprenticeship training
- the senior high school program
- a continuing examination of the community college system
- an examination of literacy in Nova Scotia
- the preparation of a position paper on the Task Force on Cooperative Education/Work Experience
- an examination of the impact of technological change on the work force of Nova Scotia.

The membership of the sector consists of approximately 20 persons drawn from a variety of backgrounds of business, labour, education and government. It meets regularly on a monthly basis throughout the year.

The VP board, because of its final responsibility for all recommendations forthcoming from the organization, reserves the right to alter its position based on new informa-

tion and circumstance.

This example of a failure to resolve points of disagreement between sector and board is very rare. It is included here to illustrate that consensus building is often challenging and not successful every time.

6

The White Paper

Some 15 years after VP produced The First Plan for the development of the province's economy, which neither the government nor the private sector had the means to implement, *The White Paper on Building Competitiveness* was published with great success.

While the most important outcome of the process, undoubtedly, was a workable consensus that could provide direction and guidance for future initiatives, this discussion among some key participants reflects an additional benefit—a new rapport between the private and public sectors in Nova Scotia, which proves to be of continuing value.

The composition of this interview group reflects the partnership of the original enterprise. Nancy Vanstone and Richard Shaffner were staff members of the Department of Development; Dr. David Large (MD) was and is Chairman of the CORE Committee, which managed the process and monitored implementation; Peter O'Brien at the time represented the Canadian Manufacturers Association.

PO I guess it really happened because there was a new deputy in the Department of Development.

NV One who was committed to planning and to building a planning group. Prior to when they began this strategic development process in the late seventies, they had primarily economic analysts on staff. When McClure was there, Armand Pinard was as well; he recruited Dave McKinnon who brought in Dave Cleland. You began to get people whose focus was on long-term strategies and policy.

DL This would have taken place before he came to see us in Voluntary Planning wouldn't it have, Nancy? He had the staff in place by that time.

This was the beginning point for Voluntary Planning when George McClure came to see us. He threw a challenge out to Voluntary Planning saying we'd like you to come in on this exciting venture. I remember very stirring words and a very inspiring message. As volunteers who had sat for years around the table not feeling that we had done very much, it was something we could feel a part of—a planning process, and that's what we were there for.

Was the manufacturing strategy underway at the CMA by the time George McClure came to Voluntary Planning?

PO The development strategy wasn't underway, but there was a belief that it was the part that could get the whole thing started. There had been some contact between Dave McKinnon of the Department of Development and the Canadian Manufacturers Association [CMA] where I was involved. He and I spoke a few times, and he said, "You know as well as we do that there are some weaknesses in some of the management and marketing structures of the private sector. Are you prepared to go around and help us do something about this. Do you think we can get the manufacturers to agree that we need to improve these?"

NV But they didn't initially. Some of those meetings were pretty fierce.

PO I still have scars from some of those meetings. At the same time, or almost the same time that they were speaking to the Manufacturers Association they were going to Voluntary Planning with the broader thing. Because the manufacturing structure within Voluntary Planning was so well defined it was easier for that one to move ahead. I think politically, also, it was appropriate to push manufacturing from the Minister's point of view.

NV That was a shift for the government to push manufacturing rather than primary resources.

DL Yes, manufacturing was seen as the "engine of growth." They seemed to seize on that, and they were the buzzwords of the time.

NV Which didn't come through in the White Paper.

RS But did come through in the Green Paper.

PO As I see it, the manufacturing part of the development strategy process was a test case. We went out and all of us government and the private sector—I wasn't involved with

Voluntary Planning from the outset of this—I got pulled in when they said after the meetings, "We're ready to write a Green Paper report." They said, "If we say this what will happen?" I said, "You'll go to war." I became a sensitivity editor, if you will, along with Art Collver and Tom Stanfield on the CORE Committee. The linkage with Voluntary Planning was there, with the CMA and government because basically our job was to go out to the meetings and try to get people to be objective. As Nancy suggests there were some incredible meetings in the early stage, and yet they evolved in a positive way. I think only because the manufacturing sector was well organized that it went ahead.

DL There might be some who would disagree with you on that one, Peter.

PO There were regional segments within the manufacturing sector of Voluntary Planning. You had a group the government could meet with in Yarmouth, one on the South Shore, one in the Valley, one in Truro and one in Sydney.

NV I don't think it was so much structural as much as the belief amongst the planners that manufacturing was the preeminent sector and that was where the growth would be.

DL That's where the emphasis was. It had changed from primary resource to manufacturing. I don't think the reason was structural.

PO You may be right.

DL Agriculture, Fisheries and other sectors were well organized. I think someone seized on the idea that manufacturing would bring new jobs and productivity, new dollars to the economy. Resources were seen as more of a finite thing without a potential for significant growth.

RS There was a lot of awareness, at the time, of resource limitations. The potential yields from each of the primary resources was known and there was a feeling that in most cases we were approaching their limits. This emerged in the sector profiles that were prepared in '78 and '79 as a prelude to discussions that led to the Green Paper. Those limitations as well as the apparent large potential in manufacturing that emerged in those initial discussions combined to take the Green Paper in the direction of manufacturing as a focus.

DL We talked about the finite limits on primary resources a

great deal. In fisheries the federal limits were clear; in agriculture there were obvious limitations.

The planning staff, in fact, were proposing not to deal with the primary sectors at all.

NV Which was a big mistake.

DL The agriculture sector said, "What about us? Are we going to do something for tourism?" The tourism sector was very vocal.

PO After the Green Paper we were supposed to be coming up with a strategy for issues that crossed all sectors, so we were supposed to plan for manufacturing, all resource sectors, management, manpower, trade, transportation, technology. There was a whole series of them.

NV At one point we had a fabulous matrix in the department and there was about 35 people who were supposed to be preparing reports that were all going to be fed to Voluntary Planning committees. There was originally no discussion of a White Paper.

PO It just evolved.

DL If I might add this about the relationship between the civil service and the private sector members of Voluntary Planning...

Prior to this process, during the mid-seventies, there were a lot of complaints coming from the sectors that they felt they were working in isolation. They didn't interface well with their corresponding line departments. The deputy minister would make appointments months away; there was no dialogue, no confidence between Voluntary Planning and the civil service.

Voluntary Planning languished through this period that some people have called the Dark Days. The development strategy process that led to the Green and the White papers was a breakthrough in establishing Voluntary Planning as a body of private sector volunteers who could be trusted with information, with policy before it actually became policy, papers that would lead to policy.

We, the volunteers, came to have a sincere admiration for these people that we worked with, the civil servants who really came to trust us as private sector volunteers. I think from this point Voluntary Planning has moved forward and has broken into the line departments. The word

is out that we can be trusted with sensitive information in a confidential way. There are no loose lips.

PO I think that in some sense that may have been the most important part of the whole damn thing—the mutual trust and respect. It continues to this day because of that process. The political reality of life versus the private sector reality tended to clash from time to time and I think, in fairness to everybody, that what emerged was a maturity which allowed the clash to happen and still allowed the process to happen.

NV You have to have risk-takers in government like Dave McKinnon.

PO Certainly. He really was a risk-taker—and there were scars. There were scars on those of us who went from Voluntary Planning and the CMA supporting the documents because we received criticism. No one likes to be told that they're deficient. We were lacking a certain competence and expertise in the private sector and, damn it, those documents were right. Everything we looked at told us we were right. But it wasn't easy to get the private sector to accept that.

It was that process of evolution that established trust between the Department of Development and Voluntary Planning, or you might say, the public and private sectors. It spun out all over the place as a result and continues to some extent to this day.

There were some incredible risk-takers during that period within government—like George McClure. He unleashed what could have been an incredible diatribe against government, potentially; it didn't evolve that way but in a more positive way. But it did evolve because there were other risk-takers in the department who were prepared to wear some scars from time to time. I don't think that should be lost sight of. Those people used, in a positive sense, the sectors of Voluntary Planning and others in the private sector as necessary to help evolve an acceptance of the process, which was quite remarkable as I look back on it.

NV I would agree with Peter about the value of consultation in that period. My whole professional life for that period was focussed on dealing with Voluntary Planning.

I find now I meet people in government who don't have

the same sense of comfort in consulting with the private sector. I think, however, that there has been some change for the better.

PO I think it has changed because of the White Paper although there are still some areas.

DL Still some tightly closed doors. Places where we have to claw and fight our way in to say, "Look this is what we've done and we can be trusted."

NV A lot of departments have consultation but it's at the senior levels. When we worked on the strategic plan, everyone in the planning section sat on several Voluntary Planning committees.

RS My impression in coming after that period was that it moved the level or created a new level of consultation that didn't exist before. Prior to that, DOD people were in constant touch with business people on individual company matters but this was the first time, perhaps, that the Department worked with the private sector on long-term planning, looking at the collective interests of business in the province.

DL Was there a breach of confidence?

NV There was one but it was an accident. It was when the draft of the White Paper had gone to the Voluntary Planning Board and at the same time the MacDonald Commission was having their hearings. One of the Voluntary Planning members took the draft of the White Paper and began cribbing from it and talking about the White Paper in their presentation. It was a public meeting. Suddenly we saw the story in the newspaper.

No one really picked up on it though.

DL We had to work incredibly hard to keep up with the amount of material being churned out by the planning staff.

PO It wasn't easy because it was thoughtful stuff.

NV It was a major commitment to the planning process. There was a whole section within the Planning Division devoted to the strategic plan that had four or five economists and planners. As well they tapped into other parts of the department. The government made a large commitment to it.

DL I was trying to recall the transition from Green to White papers.

There was a pivotal paper, perhaps a couple which bridged the idea of the Green Paper, which was that "manufacturing was the engine of growth," to the White Paper idea of "building competitiveness."

Do you remember Nancy?

NV It was not a pleasant time.

DL There was a paper written by the CMA which showed us that we were not competitive as Canadians or Nova Scotians on the international markets. It looked at things like education, manpower skills, management, aging equipment—all the productivity issues. There was another pivotal paper by the Economic Council of Canada.

PO "The Global Village," just to provide clarification, was a national examination of Canadian manufacturing by the CMA in Toronto. It was far beyond what we were doing here.

NV We had that, actually, for the Green Paper but it was used over and over. It was about productivity.

DL I think out of the discussion those papers generated came the idea of Building Competitiveness emphasized in the White Paper.

PO Then the idea was broadened to be applicable to all sectors. It didn't matter where we looked there were the same issues—management skills, marketing skills, productivity needed improvement.

DL Of all the subjects the White Paper could have focussed on Building Competitiveness was by far the best.

RS At some point there was a realization, I think, that the problems in all the sectors that had been looked at were very similar. The problem was not *what* we were doing but *how* we were doing it. That is what the paper by the CMA brought home—it's really the common threads of labour skills, technology, management, business climate that presented opportunities and this was reflected in the White Paper.

NV But between the Green Paper and the White Paper the production of some of the drafts of sector reports was excruciatingly painful. Manufacturing for instance. The Tourism report was easier. . .it turned over into a federal

Tourism subagreement. We did management, manpower, transportation and trade papers, at least.

Then we drafted the White Paper as a single document in late 1982. I remember that November well.

PO . . .I think it was a remarkable achievement to go from the many papers to one. I think if we searched for the origins of the sectoral papers we would find that they originated with the staff of the Policy Division of the Department of Development. They were the ones who put the ideas and the information on paper. Who then sent them out? And the various sectors of Voluntary Planning and the Core Committee would react. Then there would be restructuring or rewriting or expanding or modifying, as the case might be. In retrospect, it was fascinating to see the way that the staff of the department were able, in a very responsible way, [to present] the views of the private sector on a large number of these issues.

They would present the paper and sometimes we'd go through the ceiling and say "My God, this is absurd."

Sometimes they would have missed the point, but sometimes they would suggest that we take another look at it and we would find that we hadn't been realistic. There was a hell of a lot of this kind of thing going on. Those sector profiles made us do a lot of soul searching. It wasn't easy for us to say our management skills are lacking or we don't have modern equipment. But by the end we agreed.

We got to a point in '81 or '82 where the government was saying, "Where do we go from here?" and the private sector was saying, "What do we do to get better?"

I think when the first draft of the White Paper came out there was a collective sigh of relief that there actually was light at the end of the tunnel.

NV The first draft of the White Paper didn't change that much as it went through the Core Committee meetings for final approval. Some people felt that this meant that Voluntary Planning wasn't doing its job. I think, seen in the context of the whole process, that this wasn't the case at all. It was just that we had worked so closely together that our thinking had become similar.

DL When you look at the final document there are a number of government initiatives spelled out. The government will strengthen this, upgrade that—as government policy it lays out ways in which existing and future ventures are to be

handled—but there is also a lot of challenge thrown out to the private sector. The Green Paper said, "What can we do for you?"—the White Paper was more "What can we do together?"

PO I think there was a major leap forward between the Green and White Papers. We, the private sector, went beyond a philosophy of handouts. We should also remember that when the draft went forward to government for approval, and I think we were very fortunate in this, it was decided by the government that three members of caucus who were backbenchers at the time would be asked to look at the proposals with their political hats on, and I say that in a very positive sense. They were David Nantes, John Leefe and George Moody.

All three of those people were very practical. Two had business backgrounds and one was an educator. They were damn good listeners. They heard what Voluntary Planning and Development were saying and then went beyond that to test the waters in their own ways. And then without hesitation (it is to their credit, and I don't say this lightly), they took the whole document to Cabinet.

DL A measure of their success with it was they all became cabinet ministers.

PO I think their role should not be understated. The only change of any consequence made by the government was the removal of Manpower from Education and its transfer to Labour, rather than leaving it separate.

NV The MLAs were important. They went through line by line examining the tone of every phrase. They worked very hard.

But they began that process with the premise that it had already been approved by Voluntary Planning and you have to think twice before changing it. Had it been a document coming through the bureaucracy it would have been different.

DL It was a document with a lot of history.

NV I think, too, even when they did have a document to take to caucus, it was helped by another push from Voluntary Planning volunteers who called key ministers to ask where it was and what was happening to it.

PO They said, "We've worked hard and we're eager to get on with it."

NV And it was presold.

DL There was essentially no opposition to it.

PO I don't think I've seen a White Paper from government that was as presold as that one because at one stage there was an estimate that more than 2,000 people had been at meetings to develop it.

NV When the press conference to announce it was held, Larry Thibault of the CMA was there from Toronto to say that it was a model for other provinces.

PO I work in four provinces and people say to me—"You were involved in that, how does it work?" I tell them to look at Voluntary Planning because that's how it gets started. Not that it's that simple...

You need good will on both sides to develop trust. There was a lot of things said around the table that, if they'd been leaked, would have had someone shot. There was an honest commitment to do it right.

DL I recall we started each meeting with almost an oath of confidentiality.

PO Pretty close.

RS Something has been done on almost every one of the White Paper recommendations in the sense that structural changes have been made or new positions created—whatever has been called for. In most cases, the measures which have not been implemented are outside the direct control of the government such as trying to create federal/provincial subagreements.

PO To me the most important part of the White Paper was the manpower issue and the evolution of community colleges, which has just begun. This is being addressed for the first time. I think it's a little soon to evaluate White Paper effectiveness in this respect. But all the trends seem to be in the right direction.

RS I think it was recognized by all concerned that it would be a long-term process for the economy. And that it was going to take some time for the sorts of changes that were called for to have full impact.

PO In fact, I remember Larry Thibault saying, "If you can do this in fifteen years, you've made a remarkable achievement."

DL Another thing the paper did, which has been carried on less in recent years, was to create a built-in monitoring role for Voluntary Planning. For the first three or four years after, there were regular once or twice a year meetings with the cabinet committees on White Paper implementation, at which time reports were made as to how much progress the government had made. It gave Voluntary Planning the opportunity to address questions to the government and inquire after particular measures.

That committee is a little less active now.

PO I think in fairness because most of what could have been implemented has been. All of the major issues have been addressed.

NV The implementation role was quite unique.

DL The one thing we thought that wouldn't fly.

PO Everyone was pleasantly surprised. I think it showed a commitment and that's important.

NV When you look back you wonder how much was good luck. We never did talk about the White Paper or that committee of three MLAs initially.

PO I don't think it was luck.

DL But Rollie Thornhill was Minister of Development through those years and he had a commitment to it. He made sure that the resources were there, and I think he did a lot to carry it through Cabinet.

PO In the late 1970's, with the kind of governments that we had in this country at the time, it took a lot of courage for a group of public servants to get as involved with the private sector as it did. It was not easy. There was a lot of political concern I'm sure at some levels. I think that when you look back at the exercise you see that their courage was well worth it.

III

THE CHRONOLOGY: HIGHLIGHTS 1963–1988

We can only pay our debt to the past by putting the future in debt to ourselves.

—JOHN BUCHAN
Address to the people of Canada
on the coronation of George VI, 1937

The first part of this book, *Through the Years*, has attempted to trace the ideas that have shaped VP and the way in which it has conducted itself as a planning agency. To this end, events have been used to illustrate the significant ideas and forces acting upon VP. This approach to a large extent has not done justice to the richness of the organization's activities and the diversity of its achievements. To correct this, at least in part, a brief year-by-year list of highlights of some of VP's more noteworthy events follows.

1963
- first board meeting December 6, 2:45 p.m., Red Room, Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly Building.
- inventory of regional and local development agencies prepared
- Executive Committee established
- first submission from Agriculture Sector regarding registration of packers and truckers, feed freight assistance, hog diseases, soil testing, egg marketing, importation of bees, fertilizer assistance.
- Commander Dawson of the Work Study School makes presentation on the idea of critical examination: all matters before reaching the board must be critically examined and submissions must be uniformly and briefly composed
- Roger Mills is first Executive Director of Voluntary Economic Planning

1964
- Strait of Canso area development study recommended
- Power and Forestry Sector plans
- policy statement on federal incentives and growth centres

- report, *An Analysis of the Nova Scotia's Apple Industry (1930–72)*
- report, *Demand and Production Analysis of Agriculture in N.S. (1930–72)*

1965
- resolution to study problems of coal mining industry as a social and an economic issue
- First Plan interim report, *A Strategy of Economic Development for Nova Scotia*
- Progress Report on Plan tabled in Legislature
- Vice Chairman of VEP Joe Gannon dies
- Safety Advisory Council Report
- report of Special Committee on Coal
- Private Equity Development Fund Committee struck
- papers included in Plan: *Evaluation of VEP, The Economy Past and Present, Implementation, Future of the Economy*

1966
- VEP press release introducing concept of First Plan
- First Plan for economic development to 1968 forwarded to government
- newsletter circulated
- Fur, Fish, Game and Recreation Committee moves from Forestry to Tourism Sector
- Power Sector dissolved and replaced by Power Advisory Council
- VEP agrees to publish annual economic report
- report of Fur, Fish, Game and Recreation Segment Committee
- film about VEP produced entitled *And Now*
- guide for Second Plan presented
- PR program undertaken to acquaint public with VEP
- plans for Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Mining, Secondary Manufacturing, Transportation and Communication sectors
- study of N.S. exports (fiscal 1937–38, 1947 to 1963)
- *Study of Employment Trends in the Services Sector of the American, Canadian and Nova Scotia Economies (1921–1961)*

- annual report and economic review

1967
- support for Consumers Advisory Council in garage classification, similar to British system
- Special Committee on Steel appointed
- report on Carter Commission on Taxation
- report, *The Views of VEP on the Recently Established Cape Breton Development Corporation*
- report, *Assessment of Foreign Trade*
- emergency session on recommendations of Special Committee on Steel
- recommendations made pertaining to municipal forest taxation
- annual report and economic review
- report, *An Assessment of Foreign Trade in Relation to the Economic Planning and Growth of Nova Scotia*

1968
- board takes two-day tour of Strait of Canso area
- endorsement of government actions in Canso area
- Special Committees on Coal and Steel dissolved and replaced by Cape Breton Liaison Committee
- sectors instructed to study pollution. Report tabled by Fisheries Sector
- travelling expenses made available to board members
- management education survey for the Province of Nova Scotia
- Econometric Model of Nova Scotia
- Sydney steelmaking study

1969
- meeting on coop university education
- protest of the action of federal government in changing Estate Tax Act
- three of VEP staff transferred to Secretariat
- endorsement of a program to use fish surpluses for foreign aid
- recommendation for immediate creation of Provincial Forest Improvement Board and implementation of Forest Improvement Act

- annual report of Education Advisory Council
- seminar on coop education
- seminar on student employment
- support of Uniform Building Code
- seminar on adoption of Uniform Building Code
- report, *Courses Available for Management Education in Nova Scotia during 1968–70*
- Management Systems Evaluation Program: Amherst Pilot Project

1970

- Special Committee on Taxation delegation attends hearing of House of Commons Committee on Finance
- Encounter on the Urban Environment
- name of organization changes from VEP to VP
- VP Board's Special Committee Report on the role of voluntary economic planning
- diagnostic team progress report on the management Engineering Services Program
- Encounter historian's report and transcript of the final session

1971

- The Citizen Participation Advisory Council replaces the board's Encounter Committee
- Special Committee on Land Use Planning established
- steering committee to study Maritime Union established
- report of Education Advisory Committee
- establishment of Special Committee to study Pulpwood Marketing Proposal
- Land Use Committee recommendations on Land Holdings Disclosure Act
- Forestry Sector report, *Silviculture Program for Private Forest Lands*
- recommendations on Land Holding Disclosure Act and Recording of Deeds
- Construction Sector recommendation on Adoption of Uniform Building Code
- recommendation to Premier on Pollution Control Legislation

- Mining Sector recommends creation of provincial parks system
- report of the Special Committee on the Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations

1972
- report on VP's relations with the new Department of Development
- Roger Mills resigns from position of Executive Director
- revisions to the VP Act presented; the new name to be Voluntary Planning Organization
- steering committee established to organize public meetings around the province with the government on Man and Resources program, sponsored by the Canada Council of Resource and Environmental Ministers
- recommendation of Estate Taxation made: look for alternative fiscal arrangements other than estate taxation
- Nova Scotia Manpower Needs Committee terms of reference reviewed; VP asked to provide the private sector link
- Man and Resources report submitted to government
- D.M. MacDonald's first meeting as Executive Director
- report of the VP Health Services Committee
- VP Metrification Committee demonstrates vigorous support for metrification
- guidelines for board membership tabled

1973
- interim report on environmental control legislation
- Forestry Policy approved
- review of the report of the Nova Scotia Council on Health
- Tourism Sector designated by government as Tourism Advisory Council
- annual report approved
- support demonstrated for the Environmental Protection Act
- report of the Joint Port Development Committee

- Maritime Cooperation—board reaffirms its position to Premier supporting cooperation rather than union action
- report of the Unemployment Committee
- discussion paper prepared on land use planning, calling for the establishment of a Land Resources Board for Nova Scotia
- Energy Advisory Council revitalized
- impact studies completed for forestry and fisheries
- reports prepared on land use planning by the Agriculture Sector and the Forestry Sector

1974
- *The Way Ahead* budget discussed
- health care report presented on the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade. VP helps develop the Nova Scotia position
- *The Way Ahead* paper submitted—philosophical alternative presented for the board's consideration
- meeting with the Premier regarding poor relations with the government
- committee struck to draft a fisheries policy
- *The Way Ahead* changed to the "Steering Committee on Development Policy"
- position paper on land use planning supported and pushed for immediate action
- proposal submitted for a Subsidiary Agreement on Regional Communities Planning
- proposal tabled for the Subsidiary Agreement for Business Development
- creation of Christmas Tree Council

1975
- report on the Graham Commission
- VP supports federal wage and price controls
- interim report on transportation policy
- Mining Sector report on the impact of mining on the province
- Energy Advisory Council background statement prepared

- presentation of the fishing policy for resource management
- annual report reviewed
- agricultural panel on the Agricultural Subsidiary Agreement
- Construction Sector revitalized

1976
- first Economic Seminar; recommendation for it to become a yearly occurrence
- Education Advisory Committee established
- recommendation made for an Annual Construction Skills inventory
- recommendations of the Woodlot Owners Association on spraying made
- recommendations made on forestry and agricultural land taxation
- Unemployment Report tabled; the original report re-examined
- discussion of anti-inflation initiatives with the Minister
- committee established on budworm spraying
- meeting with the Premier and Cabinet
- Transportation Sector recommendations on public safety and commercial vehicle operation
- recommendation of the Education Advisory Committee: practise restraint in the expenditure of public funds
- discussion paper prepared on anti-inflation projects
- report of the Spruce Budworm Committee

1977
- recommendation made that an integrated forest management committee be established
- budworm report approved: 8 to 7
- interim position paper on Federal Government Transportation Policy
- a joint proposal for Mining and Energy prepared on coal
- role and structure of the Executive Committee report examined

- power costs discussion paper tabled
- transportation policy discussion paper
- post-anti-inflation controls report
- long-term planning and terms of reference for the energy study
- classified driver licensing system recommended for the province
- power costs recommendations made
- barriers to growth report
- energy study update report
- spruce budworm recommendations made

1978
- *Barriers to Growth* paper
- manpower training strategy 1978–80
- Taxation Committee submission in January: *Health Services Tax Act*
- meeting with Premier and Ministers
- Energy Outlook 1990 report
- report on spruce budworm infestation
- Taxation Committee—Gasoline Diesel Oil Tax Act
- Manufacturing Report—*Constraints to Small Business*
- presentation by government: *An Outline Approach for a Development Strategy for the Province*
- Small Business Committee terms of reference tabled
- sector responses to Energy 1990

1979
- Fisheries report on the 200-mile limit
- meeting with Premier and Minister of Development
- development strategy proposal made
- Planning Act Committee review Provincial Planning Act
- Transportation Sector recommendations regarding TCA/CP direct service Halifax/Montreal
- Cape Breton Industrial Park report
- development strategy update report
- Green Paper comments

1980
- Design and Construction Institute approved to represent the construction industry within VP
- Education Advisory Committee draft report entitled *Review of Vocational Education* approved in principle
- Incentives Committee interim report, *Financial Issues and Observations,* approved
- approval by sectors of Green Paper, *Towards an Economic Development Strategy*
- report, *Offshore Development Oil and Natural Gas,* circulated to board members
- Wildlife Coordinating Committee submits 10 recommendations to the board
- Taxation Committee—recommendations for machinery and equipment tax and rebate system
- Taxation/Tourism Committees, N.S. Health Services, tax changes to meal exemption and room tax and amendment to Assessment Act with respect to tourism attraction
- Taxation Sector recommendation—change of use tax
- Douglas MacDonald, Executive Director dies
- delegation of VP members meet with Policy Board to discuss development strategy, energy and manpower
- Fisheries Sector revitalized
- Energy Sector stands firm on recommendations regarding price of coal at meeting with Premier
- Energy Sector recommendation regarding Regulation of Petroleum Act
- Forestry Sector input to the Canada/Nova Scotia Forestry Agreement
- Lance Hale becomes Executive Director of VP

1981
- report of the Integrated Forest Management Committee regarding spruce budworm infestation
- response to Deregulation Task Force
- trade skills inventory
- tourism development strategy
- Energy Outlook 1995 Report
- creation of two new sectors: Cultural Industries, Retail Trade

- termination of Consumers Advisory Council
- Education Advisory Council report to the Commission of Public Education and Finance
- report, *A Review of Vocational Education*
- LRCC established with one subcommittee
- Manufacturing Sector strategy
- Russ Harrington retires from chairmanship of VP
- Allan Shaw appointed Chairman

1982
- Policy Board agrees that Fisheries Sector will be key advisor to Minister concerning offshore oil and gas
- manpower strategy report
- deed transfer tax report
- submission on uranium mining
- Transportation Sector reconstituted
- Human Resources Sector organized from Manpower Committee and Education Advisory Council
- marketing and trade development strategy paper prepared

1983
- transportation strategy report
- report of the Planning Act Committee
- paper on small business development
- first LRCC *Anti Litter Photo Contest* and *Sharing the Land Week*
- position paper on intra-regional west bound transportation subsidies
- Planning Act Committee presents to Law Amendments Committee of the Land Use Committee regarding Land Resources Boards
- meeting with Premier and Ministers of Labour and Manpower and Education to oppose another manpower study before previous recommendations had been acted upon
- White Paper

1984
- VP charged with monitoring White Paper implementation
- meeting with Minister of Labour and Manpower

regarding amendments to Trade Union Act. Establishment of Productivity Committee

- Trade Committee established
- Economic Developers of Nova Scotia established
- three Labour representatives added to board
- Agriculture Sector position paper, *Towards Agriculture*, is used as part of strategy paper
- new committees appointed for productivity, trade and employment

1985
- Tourism Sector resolution that VP seek increase in budget to accommodate standard government rates for volunteers for travel expenses
- formation of Trade Advisory Committee
- letter to Prime Minister regarding federal consultative process, suggesting Nova Scotia White Paper process as example
- law workshop entitled *Law, Land and People*
- grade 4 poster and teachers guide distributed by LRCC
- tourism impact study in Parrsboro and Baddeck
- joint event with Department of Development, Trade Strategy Forum
- board support for coop education from TUNS
- agreement to assist in the establishment of a Provincial Board of the Society for Environment and Energy Development Studies Foundation in Nova Scotia
- budget increase approved
- joint economic seminar with APEC and Halifax Board of Trade
- hunter safety developed
- new construction brochure
- R and D committee advises against super computer
- VP moves to WTCC October 15
- Agriculture Sector prepares report *Agriculture Tomorrow*

1986
- report on unemployment insurance submitted to Forget Commission
- discussion and information paper on employment

- major presentation made at United Nations World Commission on the Environment
- submission to government in response to the Royal Commission on Post Secondary Education
- recommendations of Land Information Subcommittee of LRCC
- Lance Hale resigns from position of Executive Director
- Richard Shaffner appointed interim Executive Director of VP
- Tourism Sector impact study completed on Liverpool-Queens County
- first construction sector meeting held outside Halifax
- report of Core Committee with R and D sector on super computer
- Human Resources Committee requests representation on Higher Education Council

1987
- taxation presentation to board regarding government deficit
- Naomi Blanchard appointed Executive Director
- Mining and Taxation sectors make recommendations regarding 4% non-renewable resource tax
- Clean Nova Scotia Foundation established
- Core Committee provides input to Provincial Purchasing Policy
- Professional Services Industries becomes a sector
- VP Executive and Taxation committees meet with Premier and Ministers
- Manufacturing Sector makes recommendations regarding weight restrictions on Grand Narrows Bridge and Manufacturing and Equipment Tax
- Human Resource Sector makes recommendations on Cooperative Education Council
- tour of Nova Scotia Institute of Technology Advanced Manufacturing facilities
- LRCC Abandoned Rail Lines Report approved in principle
- Arson Council Prevention Report

- Agriculture Sector Recommendations regarding Spring Greenhouse
- Forestry Sector recommendations made regarding uniform herbicide/pesticide regulations
- Free Trade Committee established
- support in principle for Free Trade
- Richard Shaffner is acting Executive Director of VP

1988

- Elizabeth Mills appointed Executive Director of VP
- Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency asks VP to co-host public consultation session
- VP's transfer to Department of Small Business Development announced. VP moves to Joseph Howe Building
- new Minister (Hon. David Nantes) and Deputy Minister (Ann Janega) address the board at luncheon
- report of the Human Resources Sector, *The Establishment of a Community College System in Nova Scotia*
- presentation by LRCC to Legislative Steering Committee regarding legislation on provincial parks and outdoor recreation
- On-Site review of VP
- resolution made designating Free Trade as a priority issue
- tourism recommendations forwarded to government
- N.S. Society for Academic and Industrial Liaison established; first successful dinner meeting held
- *Common Ground* is published chronicling 25 years of VP history

IV

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

—GEORGE SANTAYANA
Life of Reason

1

A Changing Relationship

It is difficult to anticipate the future. However, anticipate the future we must, if VP is to continue to be vital and relevant. Our 25-year benchmark and the research for this publication have stimulated evaluation and preparation for the future. Valuable principles, procedures and information have been unearthed from the archives, much of which still is relevant today. We are in a position to celebrate our successes, learn from the past and revive effective practices that lapsed over time. Our focus must, however, be on the future.

Governments are changing the way in which they have traditionally dealt with the private sector. There is a move toward cooperative planning and implementation through greater consultation. The focus is on developing policies and programs that assist the private sector to be more competitive. The underlying belief behind this approach is that a healthy, competitive private sector is the most effective means of achieving economic progress.

This also involves a stronger obligation on the part of business and labour to participate in government decisions that affect them and to initiate measures on their own, aimed at raising the standard of living of Nova Scotians. Government, business, labour and other community organizations recognize that it is in their interest to work together.

VP is a proven model for business, labour and government cooperation. This trend toward stronger emphasis on cooperation and consultation can only result in a stronger need for VP. If VP is to successfully assume a more important role it must:

- anticipate the issues and opportunities (current and emerging)

- identify and involve the key players
- take a more active approach to influence initiatives within both government and the private sector
- have commitment to government relations
- and efficiently manage the process.

Anticipating the issues and opportunities

The changes that have been taking place in communities across North America are well documented. Most of us are aware of the many socio-economic changes that affect every community to a greater or lesser extent, such as growing youth unemployment, an aging population, increasing numbers of women in the workforce, rapid technological changes, changes in the structure of economic activity, negotiations on Free Trade and a focus on the private sector, as the most effective means of achieving economic progress. The effect of these changes on Nova Scotia must also be analyzed and taken into account when planning for development.

VP will continue to address the issues as they are identified by the sectors, by government, by other constituent organizations and by staff research. The VP Board has a leadership responsibility to ensure that it is in fact addressing the major issues and is concerned with future issues as well as immediate concerns.

Identifying and involving the key players

Strategies to improve the economic development of Nova Scotia cannot be developed in isolation from social, cultural and environmental concerns. What appears, at first glance, to be strictly an economic issue, on closer scrutiny is usually more complex.

In 1970, VP recognized this and expanded its mandate from strictly economic planning to include a broader scope of social and environmental issues. Implicit in this expanded mandate is the need to broaden the membership, to involve more people and organizations representing different interests, thus ensuring that the VP position is arrived at through careful, multi-dimensional analysis and through consensus building.

VP has recently completed a membership review. The review involved an analysis of the VP Board and Executive Committee composition, with a focus on more properly reflecting the partnership amongst business, labour and government. The VP Board must continuously review its membership and ensure that the key players are involved.

There are a number of new and important players on the scene—all concerned with economic development and private sector input. VP must expand its communications to involve these groups. This will include a closer examination of their mandates, memberships, activities and position on the issues. Likewise, VP has a responsibility to communicate its purpose and involve other groups as appropriate. Emphasis must be placed on recruitment, orientation and relationship building.

However, more needs to be done than just identifying the players and inviting their participation. New players must also be convinced that VP is an effective forum warranting their involvement. VP must be and be seen to be effective and credible, demonstrating that it does deal with the right issues, that it involves key people and that it is effective.

VP functions in a quiet, unpublished, non-partisan manner. Government is at liberty to share technical and sometimes confidential information to solicit the response and recommendations of the private, non-government sector. At the same time, members view VP as a forum free of direct influence of government, which maintains an arms-length relationship. They openly contribute their experiences and views assured that VP minutes are confidential. This ensures rich and uncensored discussions, and well-informed, broadly-based VP positions on issues.

VP prides itself on its people. Membership stands at over 600 persons, representing over 150 constituent organizations. They are chosen by VP for their ability to provide a well-informed, balanced opinion on issues. VP's greatest assets are the individual farmers, fishermen, business managers, workers and community leaders who share their abilities in imaginative and constructive ways. Involvement of the key people is intrinsic to the VP process.

A more proactive approach

VP functions in two primary ways. It serves as a sounding board for government. In this respect, it is a vehicle for government to test ideas, secure the private, non-government sectors' advice and input, assess impact, track issues and disseminate information.

Through its unique position, linking the private and public sectors in Nova Scotia, VP is also able to promote initiatives within both the government sector and the private sector. With the trend toward consultative planning and a stronger onus on business and labour, VP must place more emphasis on this latter, more active approach.

Recommendations and decisions must be based on sound and complete information. They must be doable. It is not enough to merely criticize. Constructive alternatives must be suggested. To achieve this, VP sectors and the board must have access to technical information, have up-to-date knowledge of government systems and initiatives, and be able to effectively intervene with government at all levels.

VP is able to disseminate information and promote discussion within all its resource and economic sectors and is also in a position to bring individuals, groups and industry-associations together for informal discussions, information sharing and problem solving. Putting people from different sectors in the same room often leads to new associations, new initiatives, new products and new jobs.

A commitment to government relations

We have learned all too well over the years that good government relations largely determines VP's effectiveness. Building and maintaining strong government relations is a priority. In order for VP to be successful it must have the cooperation of government. Government must be prepared to continually involve VP and must be prepared to act on resulting recommendations. VP must be careful not to take its relationship with government for granted. It must continually make its presence known, offer its services and respond with quality work.

Managing the process

With the exception of a small staff, VP is composed entirely of volunteers. The role of staff is two-fold: to handle the administrative activities of servicing the sectors and to provide support and research as background to enable VP sector committees to speak with an informed, credible voice.

Volunteers generate ideas, formulate recommendations and make decisions guiding the operations and directions of the organization. The board is responsible for providing leadership to the activities and for the positioning of the organization. It is ultimately responsible for strategic planning, relationships with government and constituent groups, internal communications and program effectiveness. VP must continue to work toward clearly defined goals and objectives that are defensible in the interests of development for Nova Scotia and are understood by government and constituents.

VP has been, and continues to be, a very active organization. Its level of activity must increase if it is to assume an expanded role. The commitment and enthusiasm of volunteers is present, the issues are on the agenda, and the need for VP is evident.

The primary resources to support the work of volunteers are dollars and staff. Increased activity will no doubt mean a strain on those resources. VP must very carefully examine its ability to deliver and must be confident that it does have the resources necessary. It may be necessary for sectors and the board to establish priorities in order that resources can be applied to the issues of current concern. This practice is not new. Sectors and committees have been established as the issues arise, then were put aside as other matters became more important. Allocation of staff and dollars should reflect these priorities. Currently, over half of staff time is spent on serving sectors. If VP is to be successful in the future, recommendations and initiatives must be based on good information and strong relationships with the government and the private, non-government sector. The research function of staff must become much more important. The introduction of computers, word processing, etc., into the VP office will help efficiency and improve the capacity of staff to do analysis and to dissemi-

nate information.

Yet, VP's most important asset remains its membership—the 600 plus people who contribute their talents and imagination to help government better the quality of life in Nova Scotia. An effective internal communication process is important to a strong cohesive membership. The board, sectors and staff must operate from a common vision. This can only occur through information sharing, involvement, consultation and trust.

The VP board must energetically pursue recommendations forwarded to government, and communicate the process to sectors. This critical function will increase effectiveness and reinforce the work of the sectors.

2

A Proven Forum

All initiatives to effect change do not come from government alone. Government, business and labour recognize that they must work together. VP is a proven and enduring forum for cooperative planning. VP, recognizing its vital role, is preparing to meet these challenges.

A toast to the future of Voluntary Planning.

Appendix I

Sector, Committee and Council Profiles

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Executive Committee

Established
1963

Origins and Purpose
In 1970, Voluntary Planning expanded its mandate from strictly economic planning to development planning and restructured the organization. At that time, the role of the Executive Committee was redefined. The Executive Committee was authorized to act on behalf of the board to:

- handle administrative matters (i.e., budget, member and staff appointments, etc.)
- handle other matter(s) considered to be so urgent that there is not sufficient time to refer to the board
- periodically recommend to the board the consideration of issues which should be undertaken as special projects.

The Executive Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis and acts on behalf of the board in the following ways:

- selects and approves staff
- approves and monitors the budget
- drafts board agendas and ensures the quality of material necessary for board decisions
- handles matter(s) of an urgent nature
- special projects.

Composition
The Executive Committee is chaired by the Chairman of the Board appointed by Governor in Council. The Vice-Chairman is also appointed by Governor in Council. The remaining members were appointed by the Chairman. As of July 1988 the members of the Executive were:
Allan Shaw, Chairman
Mr. Pat Ellis, Vice-Chairman (resignation effective November 2, 1988)
Hugh Fairn (resignation effective November 2, 1988)
Bob Cocks (resignation effective November 2, 1988)
David Large

Achievements

- Barriers to Growth Paper (1978)

- celebration of VP 25-year anniversary (event & publication)
- On-Site Analysis (evaluation of VP)
- membership review
- input into government strategic priorities

Current Projects/Issues

- oversee and approve the work of the 25-Year Committee in preparation for the event (November 2, 1988) and the publication
- oversee and approve in principle the work of the Nominating Committee in preparation of By-Laws and Memorandum of Operations for Board/Executive Committee Membership Review
- oversee implementation of On-Site Recommendations (re) 1988–89 business plan, redrafted job descriptions
- undertake an awareness campaign aimed at increasing the profile of VP within all levels of government and within VP constituent organizations
- establish an implementation process to involve VP in the analysis of government planning issues during the process of their development
- prepare the annual report
- conduct a board orientation session (preparation of an orientation handbook)
- direct and supervise the Executive Director

Agriculture Sector

Established
1963

Origins and Purpose
It was the first sector established under Voluntary Economic Planning in an attempt to develop an Economic Development Plan under the original mandate. Agriculture remains an important contributor to the provincial economy, and the sector provides a forum for producers to address long-term issues that may affect the primary industry.

Current Chair
Peter Wile

Composition
The sector seeks representation from all the major commodity groups.

Achievements
- Economic Development Plan
- removal of land-use tax for agriculture lands
- development of sector position and strategy paper
- catalyst for, and had input into, the development of an Act to Protect Agriculture Property
- input to the Pesticide Act
- input into Pesticide Act Regulations

Current Projects/Issues
- conservation and agricultural practices
- animal rights—development of an industry position
- biotechnology and related question of life patents
- monitoring the issue of Free-Trade and GATT

Community Development Sector

Established
1981

Origins and Purpose
This sector began as a means to provide a structural forum for various community development groups to deal effectively with all levels of government and have input into policy decisions on matters of common concern. It provides an important linkage into the front-line community development players/issues. Current emphasis by various levels of government on *local* community development.

Current Chair
Acting chair—Heather Williams (vice chair)

Composition
various groups and individuals from around the province who are concerned with, or working in, the community development sphere

Achievements
- development of a resource book entitled *Participating in Community Change*
- participation in an international conference regarding community development
- input in the Community Futures program
- Economic Developers Association of Nova Scotia (EDANS)
- monthly newsletter

Current Projects/Issues
- review of sector membership representation
  - Northumberland Institute
  - government paper and policy on community development

Construction Sector

Established
1964

Origins and Purpose
This sector acts as the primary sector of the economy. It provides a unique opportunity for communication between labour and management.

Current Chair
Fern Tardiff, Murray Nicoll

Composition
appointees from the Mainland and Cape Breton Building Trades Council and eleven management organizations including Design and Construction Institute, Construction Association of Nova Scotia, Association of Professional Engineers of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Construction Engineers Association, Canadian Home Builders Association—N.S., Canadian Construction Research Board, N.S. Association of Architects, National Association of Women in Construction

Achievements
- adoption of the National Building Code in Nova Scotia
- promotion of Buy N.S. Policy (1986)

Current Projects/Issues
- implementation of the strategy

CORE SECTOR

Established
1980

Origins and Purpose
CORE was established as a Special Committee of the board to monitor the implementation of policies and recommendations enunciated in *Building Competitiveness*, the White Paper on Economic Development.

Current Chair
David Large

Composition
members of VP Board, Sector Chairmen and one or two government resource staff from the Department of Development

Achievements
- review of the government's public sector purchasing policy in relation to the practical implications for business
- liaison with the White Paper Implementation Committee
- presented a report to the board on the status of implementation of all White Paper aspects

Current Projects/Issues
- participate with government in a complete review and update of the White Paper on Economic Development, *Building Competitiveness*, because economic conditions have changed since the 1984 Strategy was prepared (i.e., Free Trade Agreement)

ENERGY SECTOR

Established
1963

Origins and Purpose
The Energy Sector was originally known as the Power Sector. It is involved in long-range planning of energy requirements in the province. It advises government on policy changes to maximize service and economic energy supply.

Current Chair
Gary Croswell

Composition
- small and large users of energy consumption
- Nova Scotia Power Corporation
- Canadian Petroleum Association
- Nova Scotia Research Foundation
- provincial Department of Mines and Energy & Industry, Trade and Technology
- chemical engineering representatives from universities
- Canadian Manufacturers Association
- engineering management consultants
- DEVCO

Achievements
- publication of *Energy Update 1985 ('86)*
- input into *Energy Plan—1985*
- reviewed *Energy Plan (1982)*
- report, *Energy 1990 (1982)* and *Energy 1995;* reviewed all power rates in the province; resulted in changes to demand charges for manufacturers and tourism operators ('79)
- tax reform as it relates to energy
- Free Trade

Current Projects/Issues
- update of *Energy Plan—1985*
- probable future energy requirements for Nova Scotia
- opportunities for energy conservation
- global energy crisis: stability of oil pricing, security of energy supply

Environment and Economy Sector

Established
1988 (March)

Origins and Purpose
This sector developed out of a realization of the importance of the environment and sustainable development to the economy of the province. It was a direct result of the October 1986 formation of the National Task Force on Environment and the Economy.

Current Chair
Ray Cote (Environment)
Robbie Shaw (Industry)

Composition
senior levels of environmental agencies, government and industry

Achievements
- hosted a breakfast meeting with the National Task Force on Environment and the Economy
- terms of reference recently completed

Current Projects/Issues
- developing public awareness programs
- preparing recommendations on the enhancement of environmental industries
- recommending measures to resolve environmental conflict, resolution mechanisms to promote awareness and dialogue
- reviewing incentives for individuals and groups to be more environmentally responsible
- more effective use of waste materials
- preparation of recommendations to government for a new White Paper on sustainable development
- developing code of environmental conduct for industry
- developing promotional and recognition award programs for industry, municipalities and governments

FISHERIES SECTOR

Established
1963–64

Origins and Purpose
This is one of the only groups in the province that brings together all segments of the industry (inshore and offshore fishermen, small and large processors, fishing industry associations and unions) to make recommendations to the provincial and federal governments on problems facing the industry and methods to overcome these problems.

Current Chair
Bob MacClure

Composition
- inshore and offshore fishermen
- small and large processors
- fishing industry associations
- unions
- federal and provincial Fisheries representatives
- boat builders

Achievements
- input in the past has been to the federal government because of the industry jurisdiction; however, more emphasis is now being placed on provincial issues
- recommendations concerning improvements to Fisheries Loan Board (1986)
- provided advice on necessity of maintaining commercial salmon industry (1985, 1986)
- made numerous recommendations on quality assurance (1984–1985)
- worked on and finalized compensation plan for Fisheries with the oil and gas industries (1982–84)
- provided brief on Levelton Report on Licensing (1982)

Current Projects/Issues
- export of unprocessed fish to the United States
- Fisheries tariffs
- access to Canadian waters
- fisheries surveillance

- provincial policy on fisheries
- foreign investment in the industry
- quota allocations
- future of East Coast fisheries
- Free Trade
- aquaculture and its impact on Nova Scotia Fisheries
- vessel safety and training
- fish quality, in general terms (standards and monitoring)

Forestry Sector

Established
1964

Origins and Purpose
This sector was established to draft a first plan for forestry in the 1960's. It involves primary industry in Nova Scotia operating throughout the width and breadth of Nova Scotia.

Current Chair
Dianne Blenkhorn

Composition
sixteen members appointed by the following organizations:
- Nova Scotia Forest Products Association
- five pulp mills
- Group Venture Association of Nova Scotia
- Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia woodlot owners and operators
- Nova Scotia landowners and forest fibre producers
- Canadian paper workers union
- Maritime Lumber Bureau
- AVABT
- Canadian Forestry Service
- Department of Lands and Forests

Achievements
- Forestry First Plan in 1960's
- advised government on policies relating to spruce budworm, formation of marketing boards, forest land taxation policy (prior to establishment of taxation office), response to the Royal Commission on Forestry, input into three Nova Scotia/Canada Forestry agreements
- sponsored establishment of Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia and LRCC

Current Projects/Issues
- reviewing and monitoring all elements of the Nova Scotia Forest Policy and monitoring their implementation

Free Trade Adjustment Sector

Established
1987 (November)

Origins and Purpose
This sector was established as a special committee of board members to identify adjustment needs of industry.

Current Chair
Sandy Archibald

Composition
board members, representing major sectors (i.e., agriculture, manufacturing, mining, financial services, etc.)

Current Projects/Issues
- preparation of report
- consultation on the findings and final recommendations to government

Health Care Sector

Established
1987

Origins and Purpose
This sector was established to address such concerns as the rising cost of health care, decreasing health status indicators, and lack of a coordinated policy in health care.

Current Chair
Jerry Amirault

Composition
health care providers: Medical Society; Registered Nurses; Nova Scotia Association of Health; medical, administrative, hospital board, community clinic, public health, medical educators; business, labour, consumer representatives

Achievements
- development of working relationships with the departments of Health and Fitness and Community Services
- preparations toward a report on health care in Nova Scotia

Current Projects/Issues
- input to Royal Commission on Health Care
- implementation of change through follow-up to the work of the Royal Commission

HUMAN RESOURCES SECTOR

Established
1973

Origins and Purpose
This sector was established to address education, training and employment opportunity issues, and to develop the human resources of the council to their highest potential.

Current Chair
Terry Clayton

Composition
- large and small business
- academics
- retired educators
- Canada Employment and Immigration Commission
- Department of Advanced Education and Job Training
- Department of Tourism and Culture
- unions
- Department of Agriculture and Marketing

Achievements
developed the following sector position papers:
- *A Review of Vocational Education 1980*
- *Submission to Royal Commission on Post Secondary Education*
- *Report on the Establishment of Community College System in Nova Scotia*
- *An Examination of Technological Change in Nova Scotia*
- *Response to Royal Commission Report*
- *Report on Writing Skills of Incoming University Students*

as well as:
- input to Apprenticeship Training Act
- response to the Report of the Advisory on the Public School System
- follow-up on Report on the Community College System of Nova Scotia
- input to the Ministers' Task Force on Cooperative Education/work experience
- review impact of technology of labour force
- examine the relative cost of university and other post-secondary education

Land Resources Coordinating Council

Established
1979

Origins and Purpose
The Land Resources Coordinating Council (LRCC) was formed in 1979 in response to a concern over the confrontation growing between the landowners and recreational users of land. This is of tremendous importance in Nova Scotia: over 75% of the land is privately owned.

Current Chair
Donald M. Duncan

Composition
represented by 40 member organizations and several federal and provincial departments

Achievements
examples of the work of the Land Resources Coordinating Council's educational subcommittee:

- produced *Ask Permission First* brochure
- produced hunter safety educational programs
- produced newspaper/radio/TV spots
- produced and delivered a teaching poster and teacher guide to all grade four teachers promoting responsible use and sharing the land principles
- produced and delivered to 350 grade nine teachers a nine-minute video and teachers guide to teach students responsible use of ATVs and to develop responsible attitudes toward the use of the land and the rights of landowners and land-users
- continues to promote "sharing the land with permission" each fall during *Sharing the Land Week* when land owner and land user groups coordinate their efforts and jointly present displays in shopping malls, and exhibitions and other public areas
- input into an Act to Amend Chapter 12 of the Acts of 1977, An Act Respecting the Liability of Occupiers of Land
- recommended that all abandoned rail lines in Nova Scotia be acquired by the Province of Nova Scotia and that a

mechanism be established to determine the best long-term use of these lands
- sponsored the establishment of the Hunting and Fishing Guides of Nova Scotia, The Clean Nova Scotia Foundation, and The Arson Prevention Council of Nova Scotia
- an extremely active hazardous waste management subcommittee is keeping pace with changing conditions and provides input into developing government policies and regulations on a continuous basis
- submission to the Legislative Steering Committee reviewing policy and legislation on provincial parks and related outdoor recreation

Current Projects/Issues
- abandoned rail lines
- occupiers liability legislation
- waste management educational program
- land use and management issue
- non-resident ownerships

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Established
1963

Origins and Purpose
Manufacturing was, and is considered to be, the primary sector for substantial growth in the province's economy.

Current Chair
Len Perry

Composition
structured in five regional segment committees, each with its own chair. Segments are composed of large, medium and small manufacturers.

Achievements
- recommendations on removal of Machinery and Equipment Tax
- studies into Unemployment Insurance System (1986, 1987)
- input to Free Trade negotiations
- evaluation of Department of Development Business Assistance Programs

Current Projects/Issues
sector presently being reconstructed

Mineral Resources Sector

Established
1965

Origins and Purpose
This sector was originally established to produce a plan for the Mining Sector in 1966.

Current Chair
Bert MacNabb

Composition
membership includes representation from:
- mineral commodity groups (producers)
- mineral exploration, processing and manufacturing
- Mining Society of Nova Scotia
- Labour
- Chamber Mineral Resources
- academia

Achievements
- production of a *Minerals Development Strategy for Nova Scotia, 1986*
- Uranium Report 1985
- taxation proposal on Flow Through Shares 1985
- Coal Study 1969
- Plan for Mining Sector 1966

Current Projects/Issues
This sector hasn't met since January 1988. Issues for consideration will depend on the chairperson.

Nominating Committee

Established
1988 (March)

Origins and Purpose
The Nominating Committee was established as a standing committee of the board. Its purpose is to review current board and Executive composition and recruitment requirements in view of the 25-year renewal and annual meeting scheduled for November 2, 1988.

Current Chair
Hugh Fairn

Composition
The committee composition was designed to reflect the partnership between business and labour. It is staffed by the Executive Director.

Achievements
- drafted *By-laws and Memorandum of Operations*
- preparation of Nominating Committee Report with specific recommendations for 1988–89 board and Executive Committee recruitment requirements.

Current Projects/Issues
- the Nominating Committee has drafted *By-Laws and Memorandum of Operation* and a committee reports to be circulated to VP Sector for input prior to board meeting in October 1988
- recruitment to take place after board approval. New members will be invited to the 25-year anniversary and annual meeting and to a board orientation session

Professional Services Industry Sector

Established
1987

Origins and Purpose
This sector is the formal synthesis of an ad-hoc committee dealing with the issue of government contracting-out of professional services. It deals with issues pertaining to the growth of the professional services sector and its contribution to the provincial economy.

Current Chair
Hugh Vincent

Composition
professional services currently excluding the legal and medical professions. Areas represented range from management consultants to urban planners, consulting engineers, architects, geotechnical services, surveyors and marine technicians.

Achievements
Has only been operating one year. Has dealt primarily with input to the draft policy on contracting-out of tradeable services. Briefly examined the Free Trade issue. Examining how best to address the public sector (academia and government) role versus private sector roles with respect to professional services.

Current Projects/Issues
- a self-examination to determine future direction, focus and issues
- continue to attempt to rationalize the role of government and academic sectors vis-a-vis private sector consulting activities

Research & Development Sector

Established
1985

Origins and Purpose
This sector began as a committee of the board to examine issues in the growing fields of research and development. These fields, especially technological innovation and adaptation, have become a focus of government—as a means of diversifying and strengthening the provincial economy.

Current Chair
Arthur Sager

Composition
primarily private sector people directly involved in the field of research and development in various capacities; also representation from the academic research community on the sector

Achievements
- input into the super computer issue
- input into the formation of the Council of Applied Science and Technology
- brief input to government's proposed Centres of Excellence program
- founding of the Nova Scotia Society for Academic and Industrial Liaison (SAIL)

Current Projects/Issues
- continuation and development of Nova Scotia SAIL
- input into government's discussion paper on technology strategy
- working with Council on Applied Science and Technology, and Technology Transfer office
- developing strategy paper on technology

Taxation Sector

Established
1978

Origins and Purpose
This sector was established to represent a wide spectrum of the interests of VP in matters of taxation and government finance; to review all areas of taxation and investment in the province; and to respond to problems identified by other sectors for evaluation.

Current Chair
Edwin C. Harris, Q.C.

Composition
- representatives from other sectors of VP
- Board of Trade
- Canadian Manufacturers Association
- lawyers
- chartered accountants
- tax representatives from companies

Achievements
- submission (1985) and response (1986) to the Task Force on Investment and Taxation
- recommended the government proceed with the development of Econometric Model (1984)
- submission to government on: Deed Transfer Tax 1981, Tourism Taxation Problems 1980, Manufacturing and Machinery Tax 1979

Current Projects/Issues
- questions of provincial budgeting
- problems of effectively addressing the provincial budgetary deficit
- federal sales tax reform
- continual monitoring and suggestions of the provincial deficit
- provincial sales tax reform

Tourism Sector

Established
1963–64

Origins and Purpose
This sector was established to provide advice on the economic viability of the tourism industry and to increase the profitability of the industry.

Current Chair
Paul Moore

Composition
- area association representatives
- motel/hotel operators
- restaurant operators
- attractions representatives
- campgrounds representatives
- exhibitions representatives
- museums representatives
- craft shops
- bed/breakfast operations
- provincial and federal government tourism representatives

Achievements
- publications: *Review of Nova Scotia Tourism Statistics "1970–1982"* and *"1970–1985"*
- input into the Provincial Tourism Masterplan (1985)
- input into Tourism subagreements
- Tourism Development Strategy (1981)
- produced "Planning for the Future" (1978)

Current Projects/Issues
- evaluation of vacation community concepts
- evaluation of implications of mass-mode travel for Nova Scotia
- recommendations to increase marketing capability
- detailed review of implementation of Tourism Development Strategy
- long-term planning in areas of education, marketing and development
- assessment and development of tourist attractions in such areas as resort and general destination areas
- tourism implications regarding ACOA and the Tourism Sub-Agreement

TRANSPORTATION SECTOR

Established
1964

Origins and Purpose
This organization is an essential component of economic activity often taken for granted. It has cross-sectoral impact.

Current Chair
Gerry Martin

Composition
rail, water, land and air transportation providers as well as users and regulators

Achievements
- major brief prepared on Maritime and Atlantic freight rate assistance programs (1985)
- input into Freedom to Move Paper (1985)
- joint publication, *Transportation Development Strategy* (1982), with Department of Development and Department of Transportation

Current Projects/Issues
- proposed changes in vehicle weights and dimensions
- impact of Sales Tax Reform
- preparation of transportation issue paper

25-Year Committee

Established
1987

Origins and Purpose
The 25-Year Committee was established as a Special Committee of the Board of Trade to plan a celebration of VP's 25 years of operations: an anniversary event and a commemorative publication.

Current Chair
Dr. George Holbrook

Composition
VP members who have served 25 years or are long-standing members

Achievements
- organized the anniversary conference
- produced *Common Ground*

Current Projects/Issues
- planning the commemorative event schedule for November 2, 1988
- overseeing the publication
- will disband on November 2, 1988

APPENDIX II

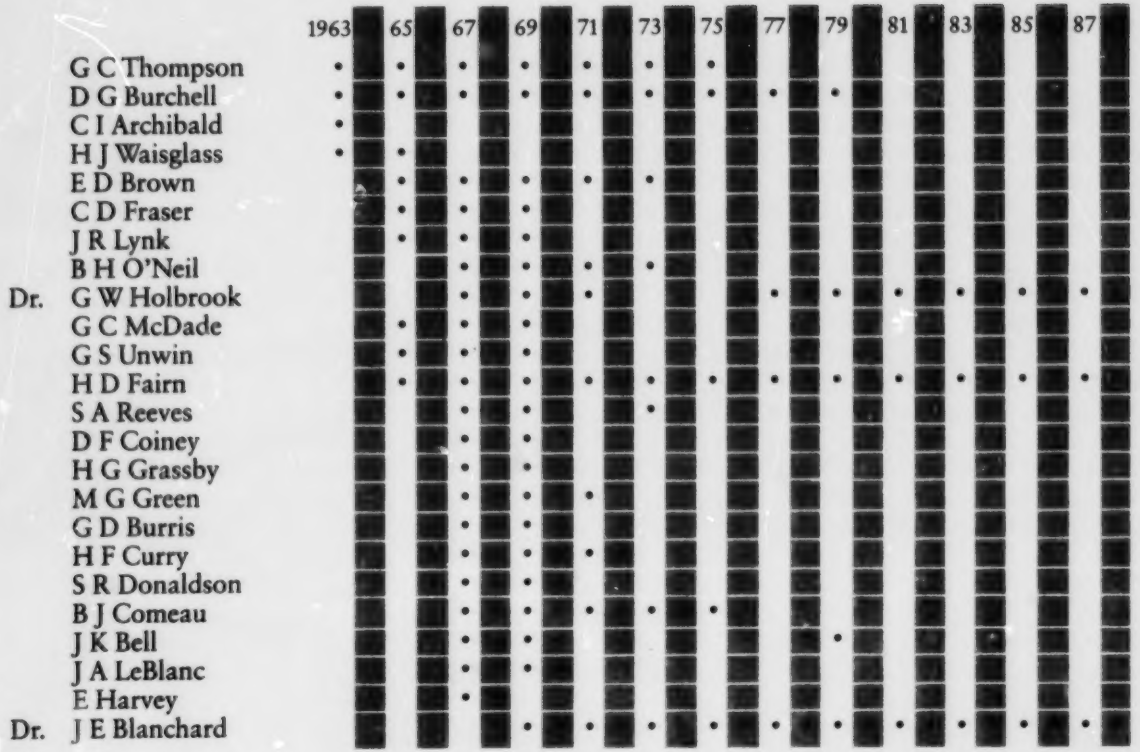
BOARD MEMBERS, ATTENDEES AND STAFF 1963–1988

Board Members and Attendees

in appropriate chronological order of joining the board.

Please note that because of inconsistent sources some information may be incomplete.

	1963	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	87
A E Balloch	•	•											
R B Cameron	•	•	•	•	•								
J E Clubb	•	•	•										
N Crawford	•	•											
W W Downie	•	•											
A A Ferguson	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				
D J Gannon	•	•											
E L Goodfellow	•	•	•	•	•								
W D Hagen	•	•											
A R Harrington	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			
V M Knight	•	•	•	•		•							
W J Logie	•	•											
J H MacKichan	•	•											
Rev. J N MacNeil	•	•	•	•									
W H Marsh	•	•	•	•									
S V Nichols	•	•	•	•									
G A Owen	•	•											
C H Sproule	•	•											
C A Webber	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			
G J Chalmers	•	•											
F C Hudson	•	•	•	•	•	•							
A Murray	•	•											
Dr. H D Smith	•	•	•	•									
R B Killam		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•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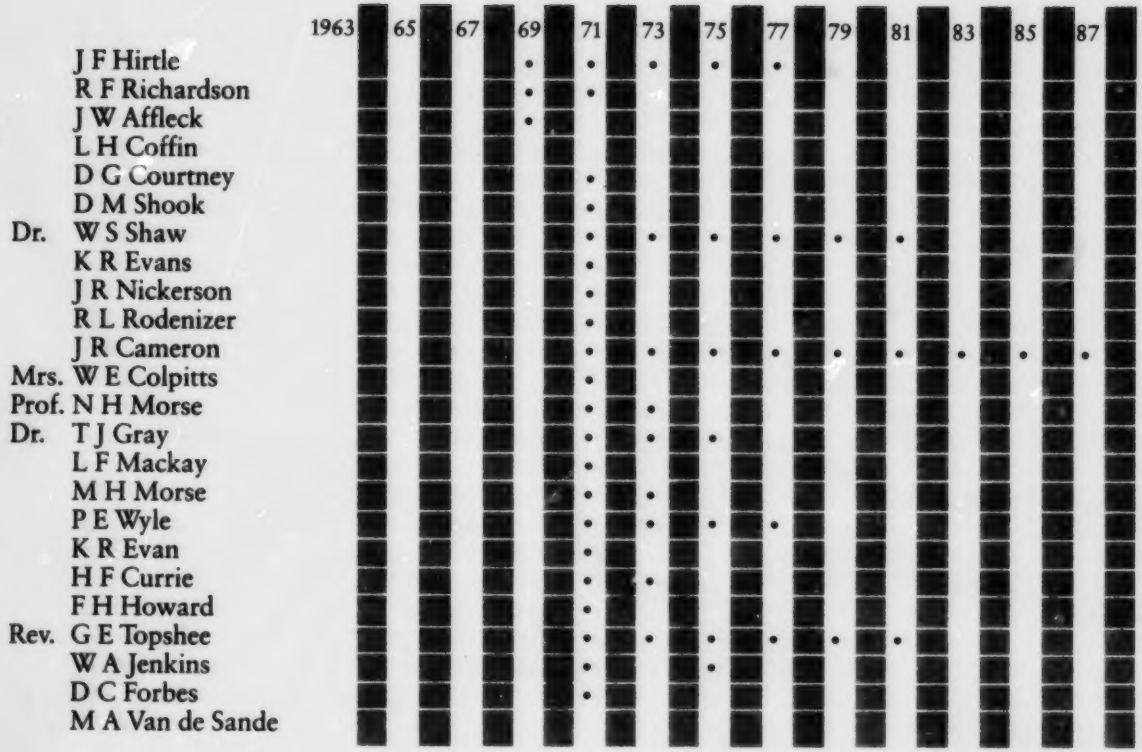
G C Thompson
D G Burchell
C I Archibald
H J Waisglass
E D Brown
C D Fraser
J R Lynk
B H O'Neil
Dr. G W Holbrook
G C McDade
G S Unwin
H D Fairn
S A Reeves
D F Coiney
H G Grassby
M G Green
G D Burris
H F Curry
S R Donaldson
B J Comeau
J K Bell
J A LeBlanc
E Harvey
Dr. J E Blanchard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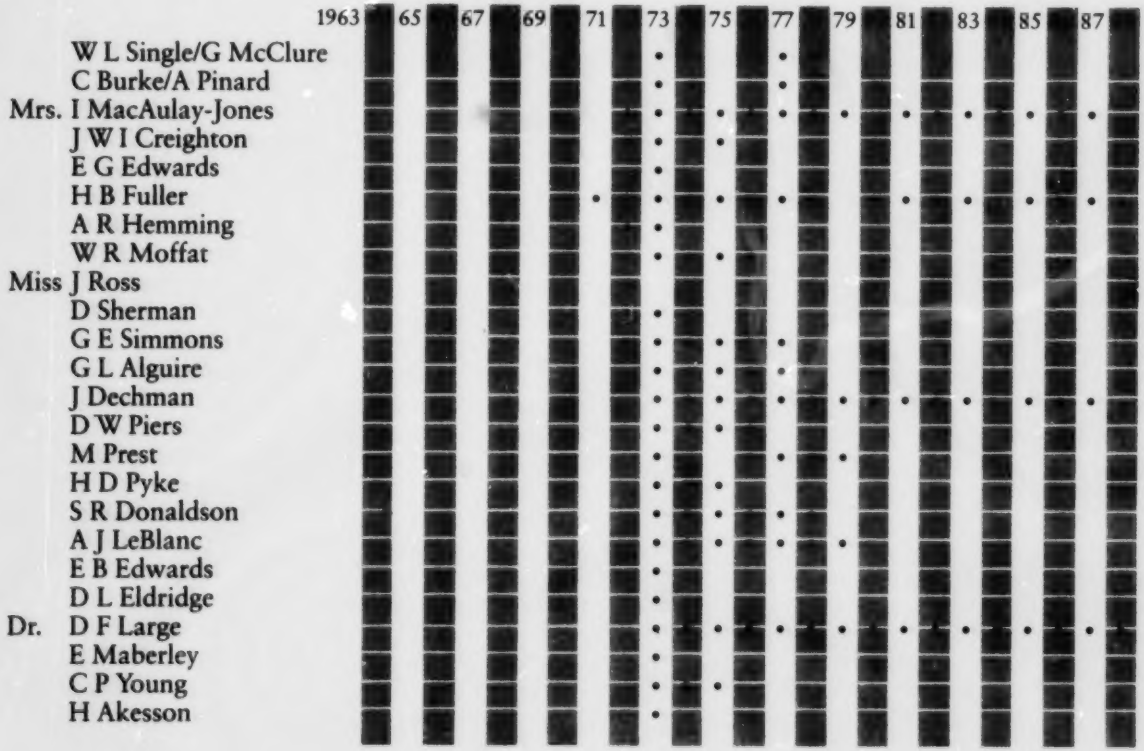
J F Hirtle
R F Richardson
J W Affleck
L H Coffin
D G Courtney
D M Shook
Dr. W S Shaw
K R Evans
J R Nickerson
R L Rodenizer
J R Cameron
Mrs. W E Colpitts
Prof. N H Morse
Dr. T J Gray
L F Mackay
M H Morse
P E Wyle
K R Evan
H F Currie
F H Howard
Rev. G E Topshee
W A Jenkins
D C Forbes
M A Van de Sande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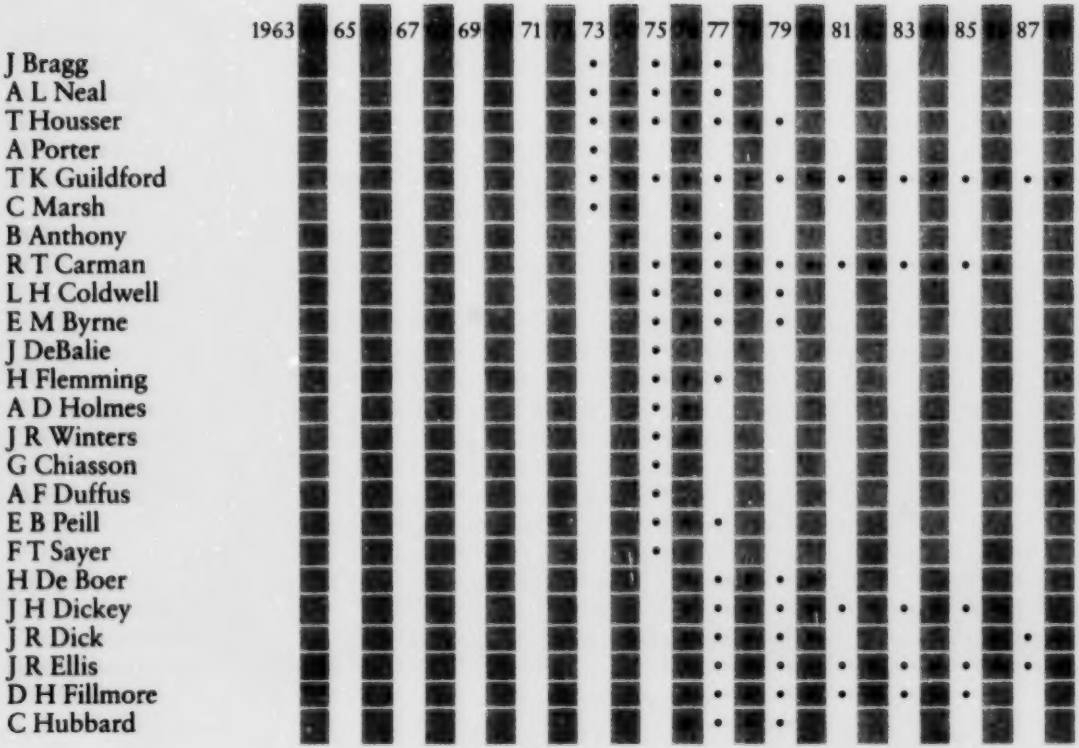
W L Single/G McClure
C Burke/A Pinard
Mrs. I MacAulay-Jones
J W I Creighton
E G Edwards
H B Fuller
A R Hemming
W R Moffat
Miss J Ross
D Sherman
G E Simmons
G L Alguire
J Dechman
D W Piers
M Prest
H D Pyke
S R Donaldson
A J LeBlanc
E B Edwards
D L Eldridge
Dr. D F Large
E Maberley
C P Young
H Akesson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A L Neal
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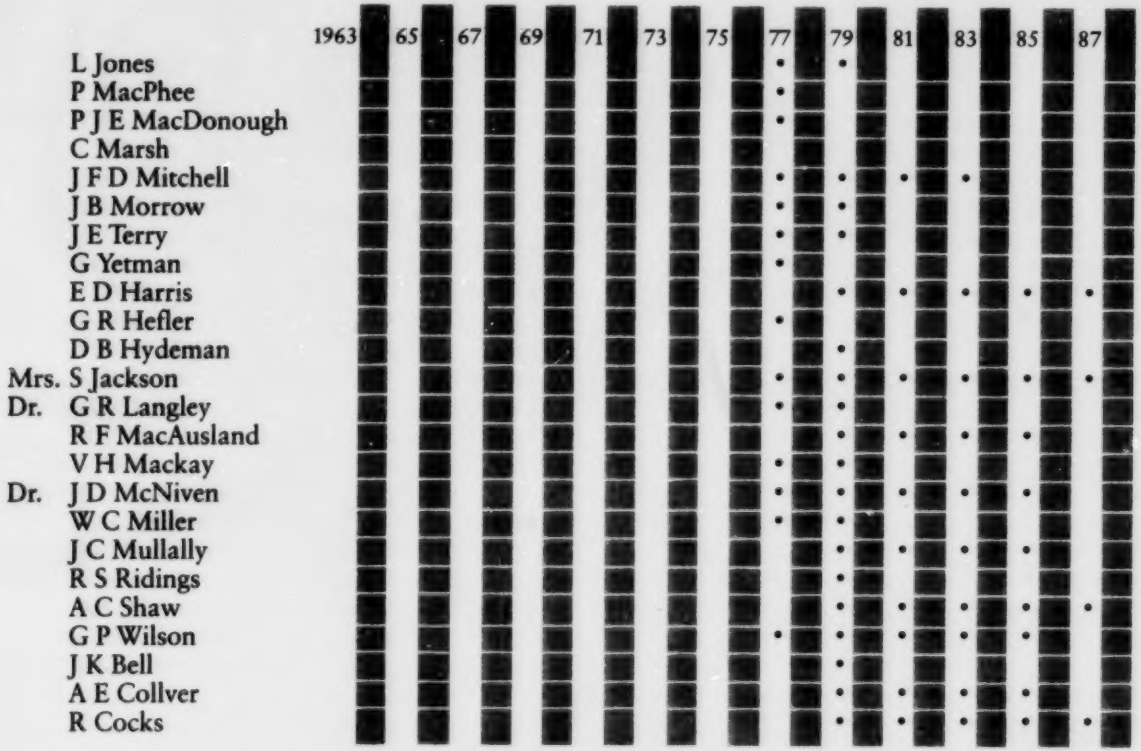
A Porter
T K Guildford
C Marsh
B Anthony
R T Carman
L H Coldwell
E M Byrne
J DeBalie
H Flemming
A D Holmes
J R Winters
G Chiasson
A F Duffus
E B Peill
F T Sayer
H De Boer
J H Dickey
J R Dick
J R Ellis
D H Fillmore
C Hubbard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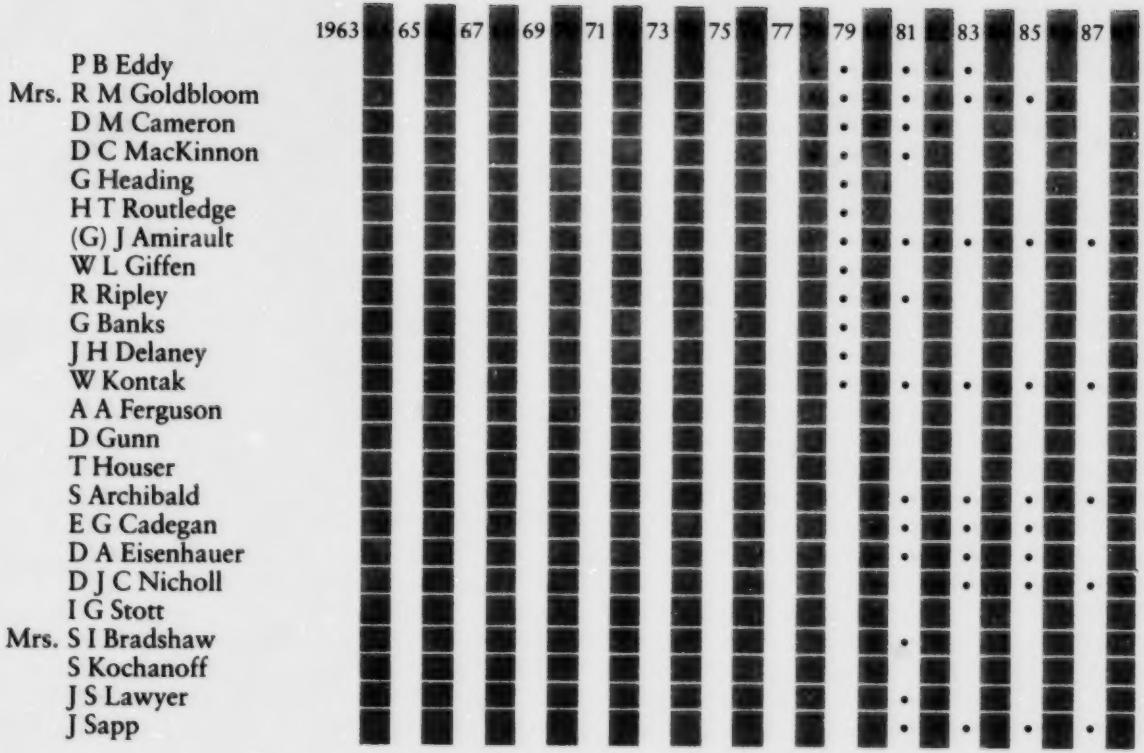
L Jones
P MacPhee
P J E MacDonough
C Marsh
J F D Mitchell
J B Morrow
J E Terry
G Yetman
E D Harris
G R Hefler
D B Hydeman
Mrs. S Jackson
Dr. G R Langley
R F MacAusland
V H Mackay
Dr. J D McNiven
W C Miller
J C Mullally
R S Ridings
A C Shaw
G P Wilson
J K Bell
A E Collver
R Cocks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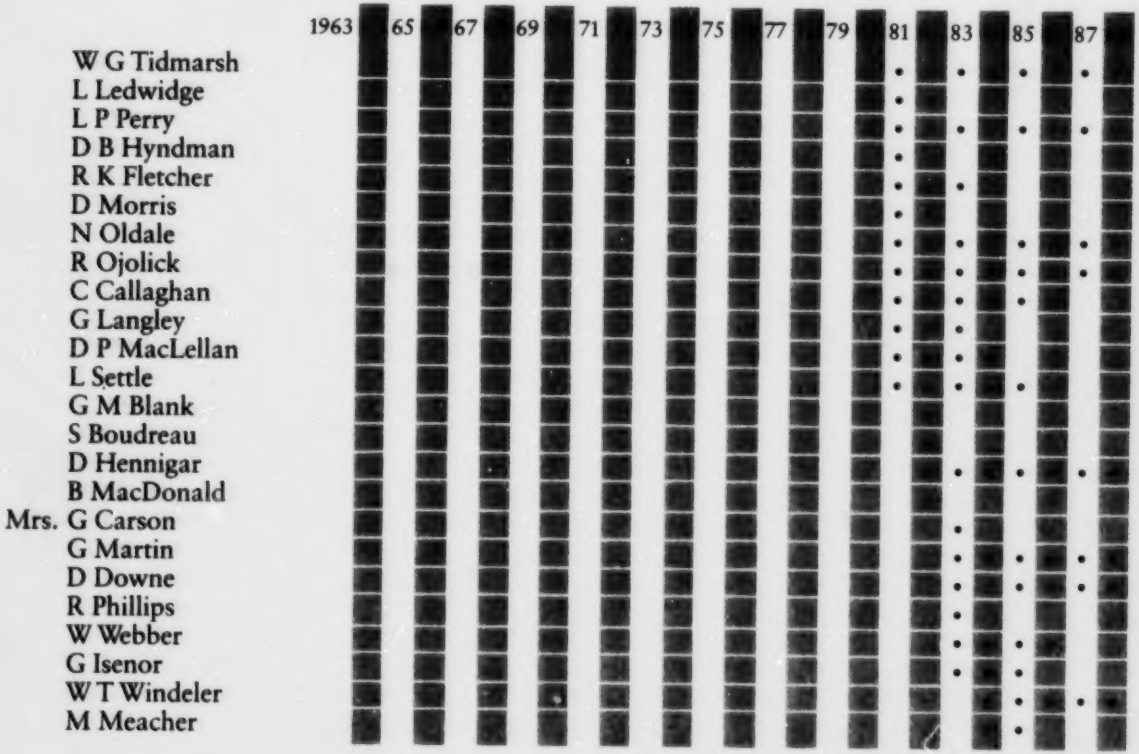
P B Eddy
Mrs. R M Goldbloom
D M Cameron
D C MacKinnon
G Heading
H T Routledge
(G) J Amirault
W L Giffen
R Ripley
G Banks
J H Delaney
W Kontak
A A Ferguson
D Gunn
T Houser
S Archibald
E G Cadegan
D A Eisenhauer
D J C Nicholl
I G Stott
Mrs. S I Bradshaw
S Kochanoff
J S Lawyer
J Sapp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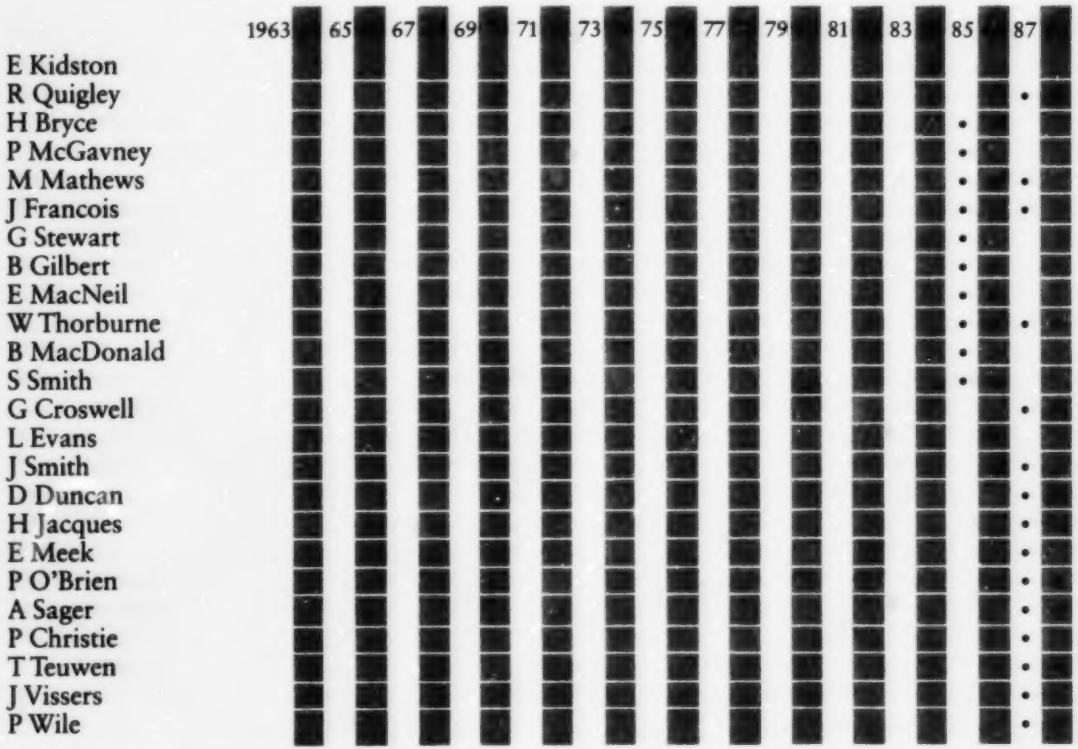
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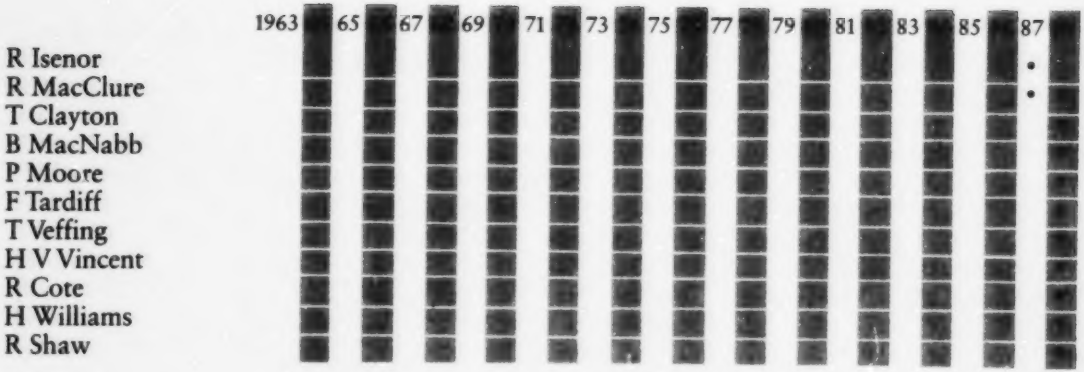
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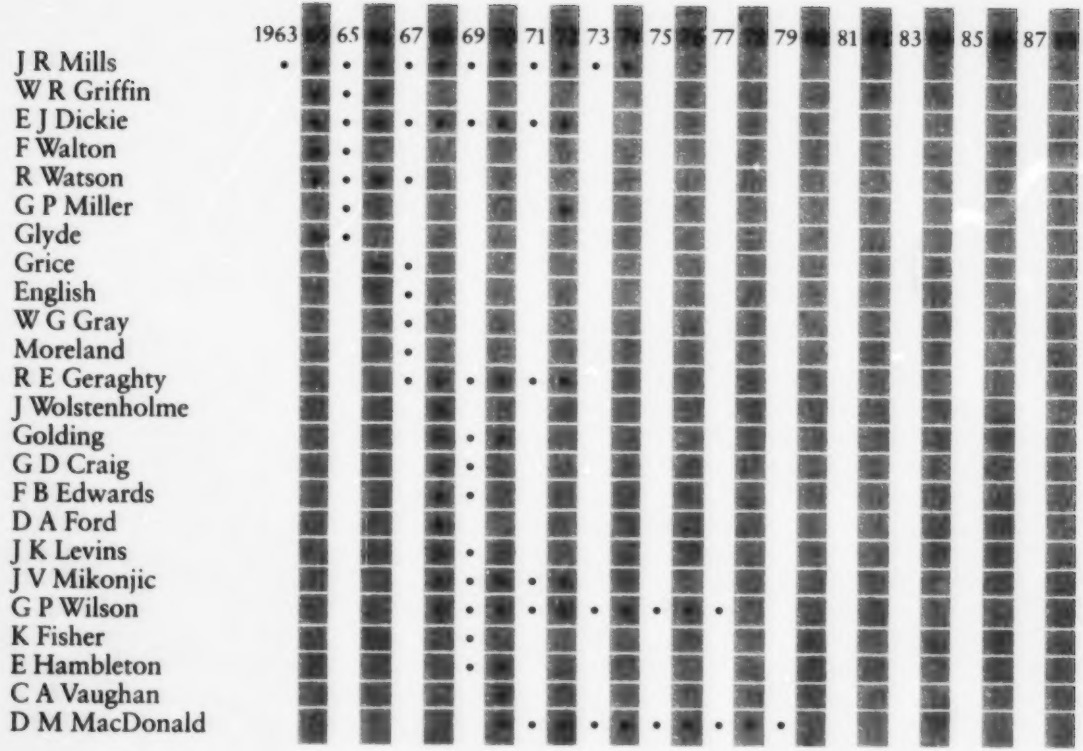
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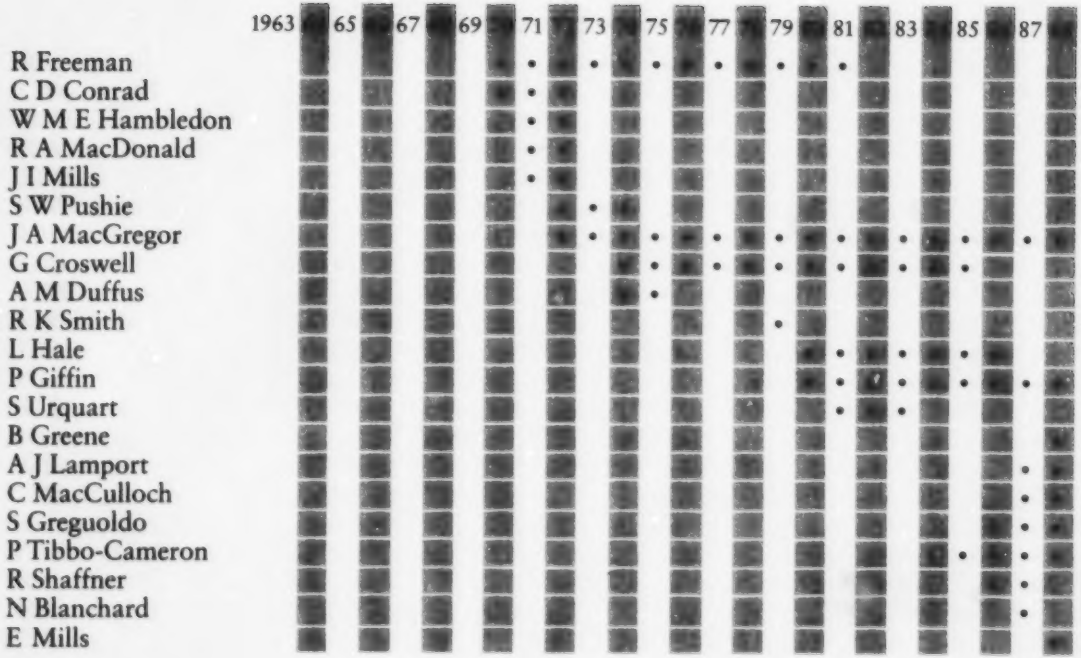
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L Hale
P Giffin
S Urquart
B Greene
A J Lamport
C MacCulloch
S Greguoldo
P Tibbo-Cameron
R Shaffner
N Blanchard
E Mills

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